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The Holy Spirit

THE HOLY SPIRIT

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BY
RAYMOND CALKINS

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"Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."—*Zechariah 4. 6.*

"Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."—*Romans 8. 9.*

"For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."—*1 Corinthians 2. 10.*

"For the kingdom of God is . . . righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."
—*Romans 14. 17.*

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INTRODUCTION

THE doctrine of the Holy Spirit is one of the most neglected aspects of Christian theology. Yet it is a truth which is firmly embedded in Scripture, and it was a cardinal and unmistakable teaching of Christ. Perhaps the greatest need in Christian thinking at the present time is a fresh discovery and interpretation of the truth of the Holy Spirit alike in its theological implications, in the corporate life of the Church, and in personal Christian experience.

No one can read thoughtfully the pages of the Old Testament without perceiving how decisive in this record of religious experience was the coming and operation of the Spirit of God upon the minds and wills of men. Up to this point they may have had their experience of God, but it was only when they had been touched by His Spirit that they emerged into significance, and did a work and performed a mission which impressed the world, and lifted their own lives into the higher levels of spiritual dignity and authority. From Abraham to Malachi the story is the same. It was only as men were moved by the Spirit of God that they became His missioners, His mouthpiece, and pointed to new truths, to undiscovered duties, and led men to new heights of moral and spiritual achievement.

It was the reiterated teaching of Jesus that His disciples would be equipped and prepared to do apostolic work in the world only as they had been taught and inspired by the Holy Spirit. "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth."[1] "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, . . . he shall teach you all things."[2] "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, . . . he shall testify of me."[3] "And . . . [he] commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which . . . ye have heard of me."[4] "For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. . . ."[5] "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."[6] With these, and other words, Jesus plainly indicated that His disciples would be able to perform their mission, and to witness for Him in the world, only as they received the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The record of that experience of the Spirit is spread all over the later pages of the New Testament. The Epistles of St. Paul, which contain the fullest description of the Christian experience, have much to say of the place and office of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, it is hard to open any of the letters of St. Paul without discovering that knowledge of God and obedience to Jesus must be supplemented by the inward experience of the Spirit if the life of the Christian is to be complete. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."[7] "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."[8] It is through the Spirit that we mortify the deeds of the body.[9] The Spirit beareth witness that we are the children of God.[10] The Spirit helpeth our infirmities.[11] "The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."[12] "The Spirit of God dwelleth in you."[13] "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."[14] "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."[15] And the distinctive qualities of the Christian character are described as "the fruit of the Spirit."[16]

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[1] St. John 14. 16.
[2] St. John 14. 26.
[3] St. John 15. 26.
[4] Acts 1. 4.
[5] Acts 1. 5.
[6] Acts 1. 8.

In view of the prominence thus given in the Bible to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, it seems strange that it has been given such a subordinate place in Christian thinking and in the practical discipline of Christian living. To it theologians should now direct their attention. There is needed a thorough scriptural and doctrinal examination and exposition of this great Truth. How much such a critical study is needed is shown by the fact that such a scholar as Paul Elmore More, in his book, *Christ the Word* (pp. 117-126), has not hesitated to declare that the Holy Ghost is nowhere in the New Testament "so personified as to warrant the trinitarian dogma found in the so-called Nicene Creed."

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[7] Romans 8. 2.
[8] Romans 8. 14.
[9] Romans 8. 13.
[10] Romans 8. 16.
[11] Romans 8. 26.
[12] 1 Corinthians 2. 10.
[13] 1 Corinthians 3. 16.
[14] 1 Corinthians 12. 3.
[15] 2 Corinthians 3. 17.
[16] Galatians 5. 22.

If theologians need to re-examine the truth of the Holy Spirit as taught in Scripture, so do the ecclesiastics and the churchmen. Much has been said and written in late years of the decline of ecclesiasticism, the falling off in church interest, and the insufficiency of the church to meet the practical needs of our modern world. Many remedies have been suggested, and church leaders have been busy in seeking to build up again the walls of Zion. In all this discussion, however, little has been heard of what, historically, has doubtless been from the beginning the secret and source of the influence of institutional Christianity: a profound and vital apprehension of the truth of the Holy Spirit as the energizing Force which alone can redeem the Church from the apathy of an uninspired orthodoxy, of a formal ritual, or of a purely secular activity, and cause it to be, what its Master designed and described it to be: "A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid."

Similarly, in the sphere of practical piety a fresh discovery is needed of the Holy Spirit.

For if one were asked what the distinctive element is in a character which may rightfully be called Christian, one would name a certain enthusiasm, an optimism, a buoyancy, a contagious vitality which is not of this world. But precisely this is what is lacking in so much conventional Christian living. It has all else, but it lacks that radiance for which Professor Jacks has so eloquently pleaded. It needs to be baptized by the Holy Ghost.

The following chapters contain no formal or serious discussion of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. It is hoped, however, that some light may be thrown on different aspects of this great Truth, both in its relation to Christian thinking and to practical Christian living. There is some repetition in these pages. It is intentional. "Remember," a great teacher is reported to have said to his colleagues, "that when you have told your students something, they do not know it." It is only as we remind ourselves over and over again of the indispensable work of the Holy Spirit that we shall come to perceive the importance and at last to recover the possession of this Gift promised by Christ to all of His disciples.

Cambridge, Massachusetts,
October, 1929.

I

THE DISPENSATION OF THE SPIRIT

"And being assembled together with them, he charged them . . . to wait for the promise of the Father."—*Acts 1. 4.*

I

THE DISPENSATION OF THE SPIRIT

In a sermon preached about five years ago Reginald J. Campbell is reported to have said that from the standpoint of Christian thought the eighteenth century might be accurately characterized as the century of God the Father; that the nineteenth century was as unquestionably that of God the Son; and that there were many signs that the twentieth would prove to be that of the Holy Spirit. As a generalization, that is true—at least as true as most generalizations are.

In the eighteenth century what we know as deism flourished, and the principal concern of deism was with the transcendent God, the Being who fashioned the universe, subjected it to the dominion of certain laws, and then retired outside, so to speak, to watch it go. He might interfere from time to time, but on the whole, according to the Deist, He left the world pretty much to itself. He was outside of it. God was regarded as the First Cause. The main argument for the existence of God was what was known as the teleological argument—an argument for the necessity of an original Cause of the universe. And we can all see that from this point of view religion was bound to be a rather cold and abstract affair. There was no sense of God as a living, daily experience in men's lives. He was a far-away God superintending, as it were, the vast and intricate world that He had made, but not entering into the lives of men and women as a warm and abiding experience. Deism put an impassable gulf between God and poor, needy, sinful humanity.

With the nineteenth century we get a change of emphasis. Christian thought all through the nineteenth century was occupied chiefly with the person of the historical Jesus: what He was like; what He really said; what He really did, and whether or not the Church in its traditional theology had correctly portrayed Him. There was a widespread feeling that the real Jesus had been overlaid and obscured by creeds and institutions and theology, and that the best thing that could happen for the moral and spiritual life of Christendom was to sweep all these away and get back to Christ Himself.

There was a great hunger for Jesus, the living, human, actual Jesus. Artists like Tissot tried to get back to Him. Students tried to get back to Him. There were more lives of Christ written in the nineteenth century than in all the other centuries put together. As a result, Jesus has been made more real—has become a living, actual Personality in the lives of more persons than since the days of His earthly life in Galilee. He is no longer a theological abstraction, the second Person of the Trinity; He is a living Being, dear and intimate to the Christian consciousness. The world cannot stop thinking about Him. He lives in homes and markets and parliaments. He has become the Living Presence by which the worth of anything or of anybody is judged.

Now we seem to be entering upon a third development of governing religious ideas. To-day we are hearing far more than we used to hear of the importance of living our lives in union with the Holy Spirit of God. Everywhere we find men and women groping and hungering for inward religious reality which is precisely what the New Testament calls the Dispensation of the Spirit. Books by the score are being written on the subject, varying from a vague mysticism, from Oriental forms of theosophy, to what is called New Thought—although there is nothing new about it. It is a real effort to understand and to interpret what the Christian and New Testament teaching about all this really is. And it is to the neglect of the New Testament teaching about all this that we must ascribe the tremendous growth of all of these outside ideas. All over the world people have wanted to break through the barriers of circumstance, of sickness, of the limitations of their lot, or the limitations of their own souls, and realize a larger freedom. And because the churches were not teaching this, were not holding out any plain way and promise whereby this might be done, therefore these multitudes sought for spiritual reality outside of the confines of ecclesiasticism and the orderly channels of the communication of spiritual truth. They have turned, with this thirst upon their souls for a living God, to any source which seemed to promise the satisfaction which they sought.

The Church to-day has begun to recognize that here is a legitimate, an inevitable demand which it must meet if it is to maintain itself in our modern world. And Christianity is being interpreted to-day as a religion of the Spirit. God, as Holy Spirit, is coming into His own. Christian leaders and thinkers everywhere are getting hold of the idea that, if Christianity is to have any future in our modern world, it must magnify the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Too long this teaching has been left in obscurity. Plenty of people in our churches, if asked if they believe in God the Father, will answer that they do; if asked if they believe in Jesus Christ, they will answer, "Yes." But if they were asked if they had received the Holy Spirit, would answer, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost."[1] It is not too much to say that within Christian circles what may be called the practical value of reliance upon the power of the Holy Spirit has never been more than partially and fitfully realized.

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[1] Acts 19. 2.

This is our greatest need to-day, and Christian leaders everywhere are aware of it. They look outside of our churches, and they see people who have been made over by these outside beliefs, these outside cults. What is the use of denying it, or trying to deny it? They have. The Spirit of God, which has found no clear outlet in the life of many of our churches, has flowed over, so to speak, and people have been helping themselves of this overflow. Sad people have been filled with joy; hopeless and anxious people have found a new confidence and serenity; the sick have been healed; and love, fellowship and good will have replaced envy and hatred and suspicion. And while all this has taken place outside the Church, something else has been going on inside. The churches have been busying themselves with clubs and societies and sociables and all kinds of wholesome yet secular activity, concerning themselves with all kinds of secular subjects too, so that they have become forums for the discussion of any imaginable subject and problem that vexes the mind of man. All these things have their interest and their importance, but primarily that is not what the Church is for. The Church is there to offer men salvation, redemption, release from the tyranny of circumstance, of deliverance from every mortal enemy of body and soul; it is there to create a new type of soul that can rise superior to and actually become the conqueror over everything that wars against its sense of peace and security. The Church, if it is to maintain its dignity, its primacy, in this, or any other age, must hold true to its unique task and mission. It must be above all a Church of the Spirit. It must be a Pentecostal Church.

A remarkable little book, *The Idea of the Holy,* has been written by a German, Rudolph Otto. It is available in English translation. In it he says, "Christianity, as it stands before us to-day in present actuality as a great 'world religion,' is indubitably, so far as its claim and promise go, in the first and truest sense a religion of redemption. Its characteristic ideas are salvation—over-abounding salvation, deliverance from, and conquest of the 'world,' and from existence in bondage to the world, and even from creaturehood as such; the overcoming of the remoteness of and enmity to God, redemption from servitude to sin, and the guilt of sin, reconciliation and atonement, and in consequence grace and all the doctrines of grace, the Spirit and the bestowal of the Spirit, the new birth and the new creature."[2]

Now, that is the gospel. There is where the Church must place its emphasis. That is what it must offer. That is the persuasion it must produce. That is the kind of men and women it must create. Though it do all else and fail to do that, it is untrue alike to its charter and to the desperate need of the human soul. Is there any question that if in this sense the Church were the Church of the Spirit, if it actually did this for multitudes of men, these multitudes would not be turning to less inspired sources for the satisfaction of their inmost needs?

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[2] Oxford University Press,. 1923, p. 168. Used by permission.

If this is true of the Church, it is true of every individual Christian. We must know the meaning and the power of the Holy Ghost. We must wait for the promise of the Father if we are to be fully prepared and equipped for the battle and the duties of everyday experiences. It is for want of it that so many make a failure of their religious lives. They make a failure of real religious living because they have left out one of its important essential elements. All true religious living has three—not one or two, but three—important and essential elements. There is the mind—we must have a reasonable belief in God; there is the will—we must be obedient disciples of the will of God as revealed to us in the example of Jesus Christ; but also we must be possessed of the Spirit of God; our whole natures must be filled with the very life of God which so possesses us and fills us with its inexhaustible abundance that it transforms us from being weak and hesitating and questioning believers into bold, fearless, confident, and conquering children of God.

Without this inward and transforming experience, it will not be enough to say that we believe in God. One can, in a way, satisfy himself about what he calls the existence of God. He can get to the point where he says there must be a God. He cannot explain either the world outside of himself, or the tumultuous world that he finds within himself, short of the God hypothesis. One gets to the point where he says that the God idea explains the facts and alone seems to explain the facts well. Yet if anyone gets that far, but gets no further, he makes a failure of his religious living. Who has not seen people who have an intellectual faith in God and yet that faith has no transforming and transfiguring power in their lives? Their lives are not God-directed and controlled. They are not conscious of getting much good out of their religious lives. At least they do not show it if they do. They go around looking gloomy and sad; they expect the worst to happen and not the best. They spend much time discussing their woes and ailments. They are frightened by any black cloud that appears on the horizon. They are bowled over by any unexpected disappointment or disaster. In a word, they give no evidence of possessing a high, confident, and victorious life. Their beliefs may be sound, but they are static, without controlling and directing energy. What their intellectual life of faith needs is to be vitalized; their beliefs need to be changed over from opinions to dynamic, moving, controlling convictions. They need a baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Similarly with regard to our wills. If our minds need to be touched by the Spirit, so do our wills. For many people religion—their Christian religion—consists in a sense that they must be obedient to the teachings and example of Jesus Christ. Now, that is true. He has left us an example that we should follow in His steps.[3] Yet, when these people seriously and honestly attempt to imitate the example of Jesus, they are soon made aware of its difficulties. It is hard to keep step with Jesus. It is difficult to know just what Jesus would do in the different problems that beset us. And when we think we know, it is still more difficult to act according to that knowledge. And people get discouraged. Often they are tempted to surrender the attempt, to say that it is an impossible task. He is so far away from us, so far beyond us, and there are no specific directions and so many practical problems that we have to face. Thus, what is needed is that our imitation of Christ be transformed into an entirely different thing. In one of William J. Locke's novels, he describes his heroine, Perella, an artist, vainly endeavouring to copy one of the great masterpieces of mediæval art. She sits day after day and tries to reproduce on her canvas the shades, the colours, the indefinable beauty and artistry of the picture she is copying. And she gets discouraged. She cannot seem to reproduce it. Always there is something which eludes and escapes her, until one day something happens. She forgets herself. She forgets the actual copying, lines, and colour. Somehow she gets possessed of something of the same vision which the mediæval artist had when he was himself painting. She sees the thing as the original master saw it, and then her brush moves not mechanically, but simply and easily, and when she has finished she has done something real. Her imitation has not consisted in an uninspired effort to reproduce this or that colour, this or that line; she has shared the inspiration that produced the original, and so she in a measure has reproduced it. That is what we need in our lives of obedience, in our effort to reproduce the example of Jesus. We need to be possessed of the Spirit of Christ, if we are to live the life of Christ.

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[3] 1 Peter 2. 21.

Just that we find in all real, godly, human lives. They may have beliefs, and they may have obedience, but before their lives became what they have become, they had a baptism of the Holy Spirit. We read along the story of their lives. There is nothing different from a hundred other lives. And then something happens. Suddenly a new power is seen to enter into the lives of these men and women. It is as if a key had been turned and a mysterious door had been opened; and they enter into a new and wonderful region and sphere of living. They become in a real sense new and different kinds of persons. They have had an incoming in beauty and power of the Spirit of the living God.

And what happens in the lives of great men and women whose biographies we read, may happen—ought to happen—in the life of every one of us. We have seen it happen. We have seen people who have not seemed to get much good out of their religion suddenly becoming entirely changed; they become cheerful, confident, loving, and lovable; gentle and gracious in speech and manner, willing and ready to serve others, and full of buoyancy and good will in their lives. What has made the difference? Only that they have become convinced that the Spirit of God is not a theological phrase, but an urgent, inward Power.

Now, this is what we must call the genuine New Testament atmosphere. Unless we are living in some such fashion as this, in the Spirit, and by the Spirit, we are not genuine New Testament Christians, whatever else we may be. There are the apostles. They had witnessed the crucifixion and that was not enough; they had seen the risen Jesus—and that was not enough. They had been told to wait, before they were fit to discharge their discipleship, until they had their baptism of the Holy Spirit. And when they had, look what kind of Christians they became: how wonderful, how fearless, how confident; liberated from the thralldom of the creature, into the new and abundant life of new-born children of God. That is the New Testament atmosphere. And if this was the atmosphere at the beginning, it is the New Testament atmosphere all the way through. It is in the Dispensation of the Spirit that apostles did their glorious work and humble Christians bore their glorious witness. And at the close of the record we see the aged Seer of Patmos crying, "I was in the Spirit," and in the Spirit he promised victory to faith that was threatened, and defeat to evil that was regnant, and he saw the Lamb on the throne, who shall reign forever and ever.

Is the Church to-day doing its work in the New Testament atmosphere? Are Christian believers living in the atmosphere of the New Testament? Would not the Church be a different and a better Church if it were? Would not Christian men and women be living different and nobler lives if they were?

Would it not be better for us all if we paused awhile, and waited for the promise of the Father? Faith is a promise, and if it be not fulfilled, it will not be the fault of Him who promised. And let us remember that waiting is not merely passive waiting with folded hands. It is actual, creative expectation. It is the going out of our whole souls to meet, to claim, to receive what God has to give. It may not happen for us just as it happened for those first disciples. There may be no sudden rending of the skies with flames of fire. But it will be as we, like them, with one accord continue steadfastly in prayer, that we shall receive as God's richest benediction the precious gift of His Holy Spirit.

II

THE BAPTISM OF THE SPIRIT

"I have need to be baptized of thee."
—*St. Matthew 3. 14.*

II

THE BAPTISM OF THE SPIRIT

"I HAVE need to be baptized of thee." The words are those of John the Baptist. He had just been contrasting his baptism with that of Jesus. He had said that he indeed baptized with water, but He "shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee." In these words John the Baptist anticipated what was to be a normal and integral part of the historic Christian experience. It was not enough to be baptized by water. It was necessary also to be baptized "with the Holy Ghost, and with fire."

This baptism of the Holy Spirit was realized by the early Christian community in dramatic fashion on the Day of Pentecost. Promised by Jesus, the gift was given, and in the power of the Holy Spirit the Church was born, and the gospel began its triumphal career. The anniversary of that gift of the Holy Spirit may have been observed in apostolic times, for we read that St. Paul hastened to be in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost. We know that the festival was kept in the early life of the Church, and it is one that ought always to be kept by the whole Church.

For the words are as true to-day as when John the Baptist spoke them, "I have need to be baptized of thee."

For, think what John the Baptist stood for when he said, "I have need to be baptized of thee." Think of what he represented, for he was a representative man, and there was nothing that he represented that did not need a baptism of the Holy Ghost.

He represented the Jewish nation, the Jewish people. And he spoke for the Jewish people and the Jewish nation when he said that he needed to be baptized by the Spirit of Jesus. The Jewish nation had forgotten for what it had been created. It had forgotten its origin, its mission, and its destiny. It needed to be baptized into its real nature and its real mission. The Jewish people were called the children of Israel, the children of Jacob. And God away back had made a covenant with Jacob, and he and his children were to be God's people and were to know God as no other people had known Him, and were to give that knowledge of God to the rest of mankind. That was their origin, that was their mission, that was their destiny. Their own prophets had made this clear to them. "It is too light a thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel. I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth."[1] And the author of the immortal little book of Jonah had made this clear to them; had not hesitated to teach that all the misfortunes of the exile had overtaken them because they were not willing to preach the knowledge of God to the people of Nineveh, who had so long been their persecutors and their enemies. That was what they had been created for; that was their mission.

And they had fallen away from all of that. Their patriotism was of the narrowest sort. It was intensely nationalistic, it was vindictive, it was full of hatred of other nations. It was provincial and narrow. The Jewish zealot flamed with hatred of the Romans. The Jewish aristocrat felt superior to the representative of any other race. The Jewish ecclesiastic had no use for the person of any other faith. And John the Baptist, representing that nation, and that people, said, "I have need to be baptized of thee" —and how true it was! The Jewish nation needed to be baptized with the Spirit of Jesus.

And if that were true then, it is true to-day. The nations that call themselves Christian need nothing so much as they need to be baptized with the Spirit of Jesus. Some years ago the whole world was thrilled by what was called, what is still called, the spirit of Locarno. Well, what is the spirit of Locarno? What happened at Locarno? Locarno is a quiet little village on the peaceful shores of one of the Italian lakes, and thither came the representatives of great nations who had lately been at war. There had been conferences before. There had been one at Genoa and it had failed. But something happened at Locarno, and one cannot describe what happened there better than to say that that assembly had a Pentecostal experience. It was suddenly baptized with the Spirit of Jesus. The two nations of the world which for centuries had hated each other, and whose ceaseless warring against each other had embroiled the whole continent of Europe, agreed never to fight again; to adjudicate all their troubles and to settle them not by wholesale murder, but by process of law. We remember how the news of that agreement spread, of the new hope that sprang up all over the world. It was felt that here at last a beginning had been made toward the purification of the world. And what was it? What was the basis of that hope, of that spiritual expectation? It was the Spirit of Jesus. The representatives of the great nations had had a baptism of the Spirit of Jesus, that was all.

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[1] Isaiah 49. 6.

Since then the world has had another and a similar spiritual experience. On August 27, 1928, at Paris, fifteen of the great nations of the world, through their representatives, signed a pact for the renunciation of war as a national policy. On July 25, 1929, that pact, having been ratified by the contracting parties, was formally promulgated at Washington. It is expected that every nation on earth will give its formal and solemn adherence to this historic document. Nothing like it has ever happened in the history of the world. It is probable that this world-wide agreement will be looked back upon as a milestone in the moral progress of mankind. And how did it come about? It resulted from a deep, strong current of spiritual feeling. For a brief but precious moment the nations of the world were touched by the Spirit of Jesus. They had known a Pentecostal day.

Now, there have been disappointments and setbacks since the Treaty of Locarno, and there will be more disappointments and setbacks. The nations will not unlearn in a year or in a decade the inbred hatreds and suspicions of centuries. It will require more than one or two Pentecosts before the nations will free themselves of the immemorial curse of war. But this experience of a baptism by the Spirit of Jesus this world has had, and it will be a better world because of it. What we need to-day is a further and a fuller baptism of the same Spirit. We have the idea. We have the machinery. We have the institutions. Intellectually the great political thinkers have outlined and developed the schemes and the systems which shall bring this world together in peace and good will. What is needed now is an outpouring of the Spirit of Jesus.

There is not a nation on earth whose soul does not cry, "I have need to be baptized of thee."

It is our great national need at this very hour. If the Jewish nation had forgotten its mission, America is in danger of forgetting her mission. The men and women who created this republic did not make it in order to give liberty only to the people of this nation. They made it that this nation might give liberty to the world. But today what distresses all the lovers of true American ideals is the fact that Americanism is made to mean the very opposite of what the founders of the nation intended it to mean. What distresses those who understand the real purpose for which, under God, this great nation was fashioned, is that, as the most sinister moral sequel of the Great War, we should have become so narrow, so selfish, so exclusive, so devoid of generous sympathy and outlook. Surveying the whole trend of contemporary American thought and opinion, is it not fair to say that there is something wrong with it? Is there not an absence of a certain spirit of chivalry toward other nations, which we had come to think was true of our America? In dealing with our many domestic problems is there not an absence of mutual trust and confidence, replaced by a sinister spirit of suspicion and fear, causing a complete breakdown of our much-vaunted freedom of thought and speech, of assembly, of the press? And what has become of the idea that this

America of ours is to be a melting pot in which all races and creeds could freely meet and mingle, producing a blend of humanity superior to that which any other nation could show? Is there any doubt that the spirit of America is ailing, that it needs a fresh baptism with the Spirit of Jesus? It seems that if the soul, the real soul of America, could speak, it would say with profound accent and meaning, "I have need to be baptized of thee."

Again, John the Baptist stood for the Church of his day. He represented the institution of religion. He was an exponent of contemporary ecclesiasticism, and, speaking for it, John the Baptist said, "I have need to be baptized of thee." And the Church of John the Baptist's day did need desperately a fresh baptism of the Spirit of Jesus. It had grown hard and formal. The life had gone out of it. The religion of the time consisted in a mechanical keeping of rules and regulations and the letter of the ecclesiastical law. But the spirit of religion was not there. The Church of Jesus' day had no message for the poor and the outcast. It had no message for the alien. It had no message for the world outside of little Palestine. What was destined to be a universal religion had become a narrow sectarian creed, intensely self-centered and exclusive. And John the Baptist spoke the truth when, as a representative of the Church of his day, he said, "I have need to be baptized of thee."

If that was true then, it is true to-day. If we look at the history of institutional Christianity, we will find that, if it has survived at all, it has been because from time to time when it seemed most impotent, most futile, not to say most corrupt, it has had its fresh baptism in the Spirit of Jesus. The thing that most keeps one from being a pessimist, next to unshakable faith in the omnipotence of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is some knowledge of history. If one is downhearted, next to taking to the New Testament, let one take to history. Let one read of religious conditions that prevailed in the time of Martin Luther, of the Wesleys, or even in the early Victorian period. It seems incredible, to speak only of the last named epoch, that the Church could be as dumb, as supine, as selfish, self-centered and indolent as it was in England in the thirties and forties of the last century; not lifting a finger to mend or apparently caring an atom about the most abominable social conditions in the very midst of which it did its work. One would say, reading the record, that the Lord would do with it what he did with the Church at Laodicea—spew it out of His mouth. And then came its baptism in the Spirit of Jesus. Then such men as Kingsley and Maurice began to prophesy; such men as Shaftesbury, Wilberforce, and Howard touched the conscience of

England. Then came a man of God, William Booth, with his wife, Catherine Booth, two of the most remarkable personalities produced by the nineteenth century, who took word for word what Jesus said, I am "come to seek and to save that which was lost." The Church would have nothing to do with them, so they went forth as prophets, and the Church, not only of England but of the world, received a fresh baptism of the Spirit of Jesus. One day Lord Tennyson met General Booth. "What is the news to-day?" he asked. The General answered, "I have nothing fresher than this, that Jesus Christ died to save sinners." And Tennyson said, "Well, that is old news, and new news, and good news," and it is.

Toward the end of his life, when he was old and infirm, some one offered General Booth one day a cup of tea. The General took it, but handed it back, and said, "It is not hot. Tea is no good unless it is hot." And then he added, "And a meeting is no good unless it is hot. You must have hot tea if it is to be good tea, and you must have a meeting hot if it is to be a good meeting." He had put his finger on the trouble with so much of ecclesiasticism. It is not hot; it does not glow; it has not been baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire.

The Church to-day needs its baptism of the Holy Ghost. A few years ago a sermon was preached by Bishop Brent in Westminster Abbey, in which he quoted a sentence by Dean Inge to the effect that organized religion had ceased to be one of the greatest forces making for the regeneration of the world to-day. That was an impressive statement, but one makes allowance. One says the Dean is known as the gloomy Dean. That may have been one of his gloomy utterances. But the next sentence of Bishop Brent's was the startling admission, "I agree with the Dean."

That was a telling word from the lips of a man like Bishop Brent. Organized religion, the Church of Jesus, has ceased to be one of the greatest forces making for world-regeneration. These men were willing to concede that outside of the Church there were to be found the strongest social and moral currents making for the salvation of mankind.

It is not a question of whether or not that statement is true. It is enough that two of our greatest modern churchmen have declared that, in their judgment, it is true. Of itself this should suffice to create in everyone who loves and believes in the Church a disquieting sense that it is in danger of losing a magnificent opportunity of bearing a truly Christian witness. And in proportion as the Church loses it, it loses also the allegiance, the loyalty, of some of the most earnest, forward-looking men and women of this generation.

"It is a serious matter," William Pierson Merrill recently said, "not only for the Church itself, but for the world, that needs the saving power of religion, if just when that need is deeply and widely felt, the Church fails to meet the need. The world needs a religion that can be effectively applied to the organized life of our day, and the Church is still lost amid the petty details of its own organization."

The Church by its very charter, because it was created to enshrine and perpetuate the Spirit of Jesus and to carry this into every human and social relationship, should be in the very vanguard of every movement making for human betterment. How disquieting, therefore, at such a time, when civilization seems to be halting between two ages, "one dead and the other waiting to be born," to find the churches, or so many of them, busy about questions which the modern world has outgrown, left behind, which fail to interest the intelligence or to appeal to the conscience of the men and women who are in the forefront of those who are struggling for a better and for a juster world.

Years ago James Russell Lowell wrote, "It would be a curious, were it not a melancholy spectacle, to behold the indifference with which the laity look on, while the theologians thrash out their wheatless straw."[2] And to-day multitudes of intelligent people look with the same indifference at a Church which seems to be busying itself about everything except the major and urgent questions affecting the moral destinies of mankind.

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[2] Prose Works II, p. 217.

The fact is that the Church in every age is in danger of losing its soul. It is in danger of becoming narrow, parochial, self-centered, class-conscious. It is in danger of thinking of itself instead of thinking of the proletariat, of seeking to preserve itself instead of seeking to save the lost; of being more concerned with its own prerogatives, its own rites and ceremonies, its own little denominational concerns, than with its mission to carry the gospel to the ends of the world and into the life of every race.

What truer word could the Church of Jesus Christ utter to-day than to say, "I have need to be baptized of thee"? What greater need has it than a fresh spiritual baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire, of the Spirit of Jesus Himself?

"I have need to be baptized of thee." John the Baptist spoke not only as representing the nation, and as representing the Church; he spoke as a representative man. He tells us that every man and woman needs this baptism.

It is conceded that this is true of men and women who have lost their self-control and their self-respect. The truth of a man being born again when he gets baptized by the Spirit of Jesus Christ is just as true as it ever was. Notwithstanding many and various modern views of sin, we know from the Old Testament, from the New Testament, and from the latest testament of experience, that sin is a reality in human life, and that it can be put away when one gets a real baptism of the Spirit of Jesus. Any human soul conscious of sinful habit from which it is seeking to break away can pray in the words of the old Welsh Revival hymn:

"Lord Jesus, I long to be perfectly whole;
I want Thee forever to live in my soul;
Break down every idol, cast out every foe;
Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

But it is not for such alone that this word has meaning. John the Baptist did not belong to that class, yet he had need of this baptism, a washing of the Spirit of Jesus. Think who John the Baptist was! A man who had heard the call of God and whose soul was all ploughed up with the consciousness of sin, who came up from the wilderness of Conviction to the River of God which is full of water and to the Son of God whom faith beholds on its bank; of whom Jesus said that no one born of woman was greater than he. Yet John the Baptist said: "I have need to be baptized of thee."

And if he said so, who is there so pure, so holy, so good, so brave, who does not need to say that too? One may think of the most educated, the most cultured, the most respected person in the world, still it is true that his greatest need is to be baptized with the Spirit of Jesus Christ. There was the rich young man in the Gospels: good, as we use the word, educated, living according to the Ten Commandments, attractive, lovable, yet "one thing thou lackest." What he lacked was having his life and all that there was in it filled with pure disinterested passion, filled with a consecrated purpose, fired with an enthusiasm which would literally consume every selfish and self-regarding motive of his life, so that he could say, "My heart an altar, and Thy love the flame."

The fact is, our very respectability, our fastidiousness, our distaste for what we call vulgar and coarse; our sense that we live in a world apart from all this, above all this, superior to all this, tend to breed in us a spirit of conceit, of self-satisfaction, of self-righteousness, which, according to Jesus Himself, is the deadliest of all sins. Can we not all think of certain people, "impeccable models of blameless mediocrity," who need to be fired with some sort of enthusiasm outside of themselves before they can be good for anything?

If one lives in a good home, has always lived a "good" life, has always observed the conventions and lived according to the standards of the social group to which one belongs, it remains supremely true that one has this great outstanding moral need. One needs a baptism of the Spirit of Jesus that shall make one's respectability appear as a shame, and shall fire the soul with aspirations and spiritual ambitions of which one has never dreamed. Nothing great, nothing really good, was ever done in this world by any human life that had not had a baptism of God's Holy Spirit. One can think of multitudes of men and women to-day, equipped in every other way, having intelligence, refinement, capacity, and powers of devotion, who are living second-rate, unimportant, and morally insignificant lives, for want of a baptism of the Spirit of Jesus.

There is no man and no woman anywhere who is not perfectly capable, if he so desires it, of the full measure of the Spirit of God. It came to the disciples of Jesus because they loved Him, believed His promise, and waited expectantly for its fulfillment. Then they defied the world, and that is where idealism comes in, and ventured out in pursuit, not of certainty, but of truth, and that is where character begins. There is not a man or a woman who, feeling that to be baptized by the Spirit of Jesus is his greatest moral need, may not repeat the experience of these disciples, and then, to a certain degree at least, repeat the quality of their living.

In order to receive the Gift it is necessary first and foremost with all one's heart to love the Lord. The Truth, personified in Jesus, becomes one's supreme ambition, to which one swears his uttermost allegiance. Then there will be the expectant, co-operative waiting; one's whole soul open to the incoming of the Spirit of God. Finally there will be the simple, heroic effort to live and to speak and to act daily in the Spirit of Jesus. If we could but try for a few days only to live in His Spirit, we would come to see that there is a Spirit of God, and we would feel its blessed baptism, which would be like the call of Christ in our hearts, which would transfigure our lives in a fashion we cannot speak or write about. The fact is, that what to many, if not most, Christian people has seemed, whenever they have thought about it at all, to be an obscure, occult, or even fantastical or magical piece of emotionalism is one of the profoundest moral experiences, and one of the most needed, of which the human soul is capable. To make it real, all that is needed is to dismiss ideas of rapture or of ecstasy, and to remember that, like all truly moral experiences, the baptism of the Holy Spirit has its origin, its roots, in the will, the dedicated will. In a sermon preached in Westminster Abbey on Whitsunday, 1929, the Dean-Designate of Canterbury is said to have used these words: "I do believe that if for three days we tried to live in the Spirit of God, that is, until Wednesday from to-day, we should come to know by Thursday that there was no task we could not tackle in the might of God, because of His offering of His Holy Spirit to guide and to help us until the end." What is needed, and perhaps all that is needed, is the profound inward acknowledgment that, without this baptism of the Spirit, one's life is bound to be narrow, circumscribed, without scope, beauty, power, happiness. When we learn to pray from our heart's depths, "I have need to be baptized of thee," that prayer will be the beginning of a deeper spiritual experience than we have known. For this we have the promise: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"[3]

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[3] St. Luke 11. 13.

III

THE CATHOLICITY OF THE SPIRIT

"And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh."—*Joel 2. 28.*

III

THE CATHOLICITY OF THE SPIRIT

THE prophecy of Joel of a day when the Spirit of God would be poured out upon all flesh is dear to the heart of the Christian, as a promise of the coming Day of Pentecost. For when the skeptics mocked and said that the disciples were not inspired but intoxicated, Peter stood up and reminded them that "this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel."[1] We may study the passage, therefore, to see what it has to tell us of the condition and character of any outpouring of the Spirit of God upon the souls of men.

"Afterward . . . I will pour out my Spirit." The word "afterward" carries us back to what has preceded: a beautiful description of national prosperity, the only beautiful passage in this somber and even lurid book of Joel. There we are told that the Lord would restore again the years that the locusts had eaten; that the rain would bring the full harvest, the floors would be full of wheat, and the vats overflow with the wine and oil. And after this restoration of material well-being, after the recovery of prosperity, the Spirit of God would descend upon His people. So long as the people were hungry, starved, destitute, poverty-stricken, no outpouring of the Spirit of religion was possible. The revival of religion waited upon general well-being and the diffusion of common welfare and prosperity. It is vain to expect men to be hungry for God, so long as they are starving for bread. The kingdom of heaven may not be meat and drink, but neither does it exist among men without them. The close connection between prosperity and Pentecost, between economics and evangelism, is often overlooked. Probably the very union of the two words may seem strange and out of place. What has economics to do with evangelism? The two ideas are distinct and operate in totally different spheres. What have the laws of trade and industry to do with the possibilities of a revival? Could any two people be working in more opposite spheres than a professor of economics and a professional evangelist?

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[1] Acts. 2. 14-16.

As a matter of fact, these two ideas have everything to do with each other, and whether they know it or not, the economist and the evangelist are engaged in a common enterprise. We need to remember that there can be no real revival of religion until first there has been a revival of economic justice, and the diffusion of a common material well-being. Thus the real test of the sincerity of any revival of religion is a new social conscience. The Church ought thus to be tremendously interested in the economic order, for the revival of religion for which the Church waits depends upon a juster economic arrangement than the world now knows.

Professor George Adam Smith has gone so far as to say: "Every real revival of religion that the Christian world has seen has happened in years of prosperity. Religious and social degradation go hand in hand."[2] So long as a large fraction of the people live perilously near the poverty line, or below it; so long as men and women have to struggle so hard to keep body and soul together that they have neither leisure nor desire to concern themselves with the higher things of the Spirit; so long as the children are so crushed by premature toil that they cannot develop naturally into the higher destinies of their nature; so long as men go wandering homelessly from place to place looking for work, so that they have neither settled habitation nor that deeper settlement of soul to which a permanent moral appeal can be made—so long preachers may preach, and evangelists may exhort, religious campaigns may be inaugurated, but there will be, because there can be, no general response from the soul of man to the voice of God. Jesus fed the multitudes with the bread that perishes before He talked to them about the Bread of Life. The Church will never make its spiritual teaching carry so long as those to whom it speaks suffer from physical destitution. But "afterward," when men live in homes that they have built, that they own, and in which they can live; when a sense of security has taken the place of economic fear; when children can prolong their natural childhood; when the wealth of the land has been distributed according to the principles of justice, so that a few do not control uncounted millions whereas the many are living from hand to mouth, or are not living at all, then, when that day comes, the Church will know an outpouring of the Spirit of God, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy of righteousness, your old men shall dream dreams of holiness, and your young men shall see visions of themselves and of the world which they never saw before.

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[2] *Expositor's Bible*, Minor Prophets, Joel, *in loco.*

Joel in his inspired prophecy points out another great truth when he declares that God's Spirit will be poured out upon *all* flesh. No one is left without this witness of God. For the Christian this truth has its vast importance, and one that has often been overlooked. Men may be without the knowledge of God the Father; men may be without the knowledge of God the Son—these have not been poured out upon all flesh. Some have that knowledge and some have not that knowledge, but the knowledge of God the Holy Ghost, the presence of the Spirit—this has not been withheld from any. That Spirit has been poured out upon all flesh. It has been shed abroad upon the hearts of all men everywhere.

And it is because no man anywhere has been left without the witness of God's Spirit that no man anywhere has been left outside the real family of God. If to belong to that family men had to believe in God the Father, some would be left out; if to belong to that family all men had to believe in God the Son, more would be left out. But because all men have the witness and the knowledge in their hearts of God's Holy Spirit, all men everywhere belong to the family of God. God's family is as broad as God's Spirit; and God's Spirit is as broad as humanity. Therefore His family includes all men, without respect to race or creed or opinion. It is the great democracy of the Spirit.

The conception of such a spiritual democracy as that is a divine truth. There are some things that men never come to believe unless God teaches them, and this is one of them. The tendency with man, as history amply shows, is just the other way. Man's idea is to limit the sphere of revelation and the number of the elect. Selfishness and exclusiveness operate in the sphere of religion as well as anywhere else. This the history of all religions plainly proves. Men like to feel that they have special privileges with their God, are the possessors of special proprietary rights which are theirs alone. The idea that the grace and favour of God are limited to those who have special knowledge of Him or who worship Him in special ways and forms is an exceedingly snug and comfortable doctrine. You know where you are. You have well-defined lines and limits to your religious cult and company. You know who belongs and who does not. But there is something very vague and disturbing in this doctrine of a broad, illimitable democracy of the Spirit. It says that those who have not the knowledge that we have, who have not the revelation that we have, who are without our special election, may "belong" as much as we do; that those who are without the system may "belong" as truly to God as those who are within it. To what good, then, one is tempted to ask, is the system? Of what use the special knowledge? Of what importance the plan of salvation, if those who know nothing of the plan are still among the number of the saved?

Thus, when we read the history of religion, we find men insisting on the system as a rigid and exclusive thing. But we also find the Spirit of God breaking down the barriers and ushering us into a truly catholic conception of a family of God, including all men who are taught and led by the Spirit of God. It is the Spirit of God that bears witness that they are the children of God.

In the Old Testament we find these two competing notions between the system, which includes only the few, and the teaching of the

Spirit, which includes many who are entirely outside the sphere of the special revelation and the special knowledge of God. Orthodox Judaism, as we all know, drew a hard-and-fast line between Hebrew and heathen—between Jew and Gentile; between those who are the children of God and those who are not; between those who have the knowledge of the one true God and those who have not; between those who are chosen by God and those who are not. This distinction runs all through the Old Testament, a line that may be as thin as a hair, but which is as hard as a diamond, and tends to become more and more firm and unyielding as time goes on. But opposed to it there is the larger teaching of the Spirit. The Spirit of God kept breaking through the growing exclusiveness of the Hebrews, ushering us into a larger humanity in which the Spirit of God is seen not to be bound or to be limited to any race. We think of the mysterious figure of Melchisedec, the King of Salem—a contemporary of Abraham, wholly outside the special revelation which God prepares for Abraham, entering within that general illumination wherewith God's Holy Spirit lightens the hearts of all of His children. We think of Balaam, a heathen prophet, without that knowledge of Jehovah which had been born into the hearts of Israel—and yet within the control of God's Spirit, which can work upon the hearts of men apart from the apprehensions of their mind. We think of the wonderful teaching of the book of Jonah—of the religious capacity of the Ninevites, of those who had been the enemies of God and the foes of Israel. Jonah had consented to preach to them because of his persuasion that they would not listen and understand and obey his message. And he was filled with wonder and with indignation when he discovered that they are capable of repentance. There is the catholic teaching of that book, that even the enemies of God are not without the witness of His Spirit which pleads for repentance. "For this teeming humanity he claims the universal human possibility of repentance—that and nothing more. Under every form and character of human life, beneath all needs and all habits, deeper than despair, and more native to man than sin itself, lies the power of the heart to turn. This witness of the Spirit is the indispensable secret of hope. It lies in every heart, needing indeed some dream of the Divine Mercy to rouse it, but when roused, neither ignorance of God, nor pride, can long withstand it. This primal human right, our author claims for even the men of Nineveh."[3]

And before the Old Testament closes we have a wonderful illustration of ways in which God's Spirit breaks through the barriers of men and teaches the inclusiveness of the family of God. In a book where we should least look for it, in the prophet Malachi, we find the words, "My name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name and a pure offering."

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[3] George Adam Smith, *Expositor's Bible*, Minor Prophets, Jonah, *in loco*.

It is not a mere question of righteous people existing in every nation who shall please Jehovah because of their lives. The very sacrifice of their hearts is pure and acceptable to Him. "Never had we had in prophecy, even the most far-seeing and evangelical, a statement so generous and catholic as this."[4] It is a frank recognition of the universalism of the Spirit of God and thus of the universal family of God, and the universal worth of the worship and adoration of His children under whatever name and sign.

And it was because Jesus taught this larger religion, not of system but of Spirit, that He came into conflict with the Judaism of His day. To hear that God is a Spirit, and that they who worshipped Him in Spirit upon the top of Mount Gerizim worshipped Him more truly than the Jews, who did not worship Him in the Spirit at Jerusalem, was indeed galling doctrine. To have a Roman centurion who was not even a proselyte, and a Syro-Phœnician woman who was still a heathen, set up above scribe and Pharisee as an illustration of a real faith, was indeed maddening. To be taught in the synagogue that the Gentiles, who were never the objects of a Divine

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[4] George Adam Smith, *Expositor's Bible*, Minor Prophets, Malachi, *in loco*.

Grace, should be first, and the Jews who were, should be last, must have sounded like blasphemy. To be told that the children of Abraham were not, therefore, the children of God, and that the children of Ishmael were on a level with the children of Isaac—this was to upset the very foundations of Judaism, and they rose up and cast Him out and crucified Him.

Yet Christianity itself, even from its birth hour, was slow to free itself from the narrower definitions and conceptions of religion. The struggle has gone on in the heart of Christianity as truly as it went on in the heart of Judaism. The clanniest and most exclusive instincts of the human heart have manifested themselves as truly within the sphere of the New Testament as of the Old Testament revelation.

The first disciples were slow to learn the new truth of the catholicity of the Spirit, of the spiritual brotherhood of all men. They were inclined from the first to limit the company of disciples to these who had named the name of Christ, and to discredit the casting out of devils by those who "follow not with us." They had to be taught that "He that is not against us is for us"; that the sign of discipleship is not knowledge of the name, but evidence of the life; that the Spirit of God is poured out upon all flesh. When Christianity began its career it began with the idea that the Gentiles must become Jews before they could become Christians. Peter needed a vision from the housetop before he would baptize Cornelius, a godly centurion, because he was not a Jew. St. Paul had to fight a long, hard battle before he could convince the early Church that the witness of the Spirit in the heart of Gentiles was real religion. The Spirit of God, according to St. Paul, is broader than any system. Those who have not been instructed in the faith do by nature the things contained in the law. They show the work of the law that is within their hearts. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."[5] The Athenians worshipping an unknown God proved that they were very religious. Christ, through His Spirit, he declared was "Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe."[6] One may not name the name of Christ, but he is none the less His.

And if St. Paul had a hard time carrying the point in his day, spiritual prophets have had a hard time ever since in winning the argument of the great democracy of the Spirit. The Church has always wanted to draw lines—only rubbing out one to draw another. It began by drawing the lines between Jew and Gentile—then between the baptized and the unbaptized; then between the elect and non-elect; the believer and the unbeliever; then between those who were of the Church and those who were not.

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[5] Romans 8. 16.

[6] 1 Timothy 4. 10.

Yet the Spirit is not quenched. Never in the the Spirit—the Christian democracy of all those prophets stilled who kept on proclaiming a larger Christian brotherhood, the catholicity of the Spirit—the Christian democracy of all those upon whom the Spirit of God, independent of knowledge, of cult, of system, had been poured. The old Fathers of the Church could not escape the vision of such a broader brotherhood. From the lips of Tertullian fell that immortal phrase, *"Anima naturaliter Christiana":* a soul that is by nature—not by knowledge or by special revelation, but by nature—Christian. And it is to St. Augustine that we owe that magnificent word, that was born out of his soul as he contemplated the wonders of the pre-Christian world: "The world was truly Christian from the day of its creation. It has been called Christian only since Christ."

But it is not to the churchmen of the Middle Ages, but to the prophets and poets and artists that we look for the broadest proclamation of this larger Christian brotherhood. We find it in Dante, who does not hesitate to put many of the Church Fathers, and even Popes, in the *Inferno,* while he elevates to a higher rank some of the noblest figures of antiquity who were outside the sphere of revelation. In this act of spiritual audacity Dante ranks himself among the great prophets of all time.

The great artists of the Middle Ages did not hesitate to array themselves on the side of the Spirit rather than on the side of system. Some of the great mediæval paintings preach the sublime truth of the catholicity of the Spirit, of the way in which God has poured forth His Spirit upon all flesh. In the Church of Santa Croce, in Florence, for example, one finds the fresco of Giotto in which St. Francis stands before the Sultan. Now, the strange thing is that what fastens our attention in that painting is not the figure of the saint, but the figure of the Sultan. Here is Christian confronting heathen. And one might have expected the one to have been idealized at the expense of the other. What one really sees is almost the opposite. The figure of St. Francis is indeed noble, but the compelling figure is that of the heathen king as he looks, to quote Ruskin's words, on his Magi, with the quiet eyes of decision: "He is much the noblest person in the room—though an infidel, the true hero of the scene, far more than St. Francis. It is evidently [of him] that the artist wants you to look and think in the picture. He does not take the view of the Heathen which you would get in an Exeter Hall meeting. Does not expatiate on their ignorance, their blackness or their nakedness. . . . Does not imagine every other religion except his own to be log-worship. . . . But to those who worship God, and who have obeyed the laws of heaven written in their hearts, and numbered the stars of it visible to them—

to these a nearer star may rise, and a higher God be revealed."[7]

This Sultan of the Christian artist is the embodiment of the Whitsunday truth—that the knowledge of God may be limited, but that the Spirit of God is not let or hindered and may shine forth from the heart of a heathen king as truly as from that of a Christian saint. And over and over again one has that sermon preached to him as one wanders about what is called the heathen world. He finds it preached to him as he stands before the bust of one of the noble Roman emperors on the Capitoline Hill—that of Antonius Pius:

"I saw a calm and princely presence come,
Who, stately as the imperial purple, bore
His robe; a saint in mien, mild, innocent,
Perfect in manhood, with clear eye serene,
And lofty port; who from the sages took
What lessons earth could give, but trod no less
The toilsome path of duty to the end.
And as he passed, I knew the kingly ghost
Of Antonius, who knew not Christ indeed
Yet not the less was His; I marked the calm
And thoughtful face of him, who ruled himself,
And through himself, the world."

"Who knew not Christ indeed, yet not the less was His." There is the story of the Spirit—there is the message of the inescapableness of the Spirit of Christ—there is the broad and human and tolerant truth that they who know not Christ indeed, but breathe His Spirit and live His life, none the less are His.

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[7] "Mornings in Florence," III, "Before the Soldan."

There never was a day when this doctrine of the essential democracy of the Spirit was more needed than it is to-day. We need to remember how closely associated are the deepest truths of theology with the most practical and urgent needs of men. How remote might seem to be the teaching of the Holy Ghost from these distracting problems of our modern world! Yet nothing short of a fresh apprehension of this truth will give us the key to their solution. The real answer to our questions lies deep. This world cannot be rebuilt by tinkering it from the outside—its foundation must be laid in deep spiritual truths. What, therefore, we are yearning for is a true world democracy; a fellowship uniting all peoples in a community of sympathy and understanding in a truly co-operative life.

To bring that about barriers must be burned away; distinctions of nationality, of religion, of race, of colour must be lost sight of; prejudices must be forgotten, and all mankind must be united in a fellowship that rests upon broad and unshakable foundations. And when we dig deep for a foundation that is broad enough, solid enough thus to unite all men in a community of interest and of life, we find it to be this: the common witness in the hearts of all men that they are the children of God. At this point, and at this point alone, all men join hands and are brothers. The new world-democracy will never be realized short of the truth that the Spirit of God has been poured out upon all flesh; that all men everywhere have within them the witness of His Spirit, and, because they have, therefore all men are bound together in one spiritual family.

Nothing short of such a baptism of the Holy Ghost will break down barriers of tradition and prejudice and enable all men in a truly co-operative spirit to rebuild the foundation of our shattered world.

It is here that our missionaries, our truly great missionaries, become the spiritual leaders of our modern world. They more than any other men and women of our time have insisted upon this fundamental truth of the spiritual oneness of all mankind. It was a modern missionary who said: "All truth is Christian and, whatever its secondary source, comes primarily from Him who lighteth every man that cometh into the world. There are no two sources of truth; there is but one—and Christ is the Fullness and the Fulfiller who is always everywhere present in all the faiths in the measure in which they hold religious truth and spiritual values. He is the best missionary who, when he reaches the people to whom he goes, ceases to be an Englishman or an American—and loses all national distinction in one great engulfing desire to save these who henceforth should be his own. Attempt it as we may, if there be in us any secret contempt for the people, any lofty feeling of haughty superiority, any idea of comparative worthlessness in the race, or poverty of salvable material, the message is without power. But that message comes with power from the lips of men who come from mounts of vision where they looked upon God, that they might learn to look with inclusive sympathy and comprehending love upon our common humanity, remembering that God's Spirit has been poured out on all flesh, and that every manifestation of the Spirit of God is of the essence of truth itself, that truth which finds its completion and fulfillment in Jesus Christ."

Nothing short of such a spiritual persuasion will lay the foundations of a true and lasting democracy among the peoples of the world.

Only such a conception will lay the permanent foundation of a true democracy here in America. Here we touch in our Whitsunday truth the key to the solution of what is known as the race problem. We hear much of "Americanization." But much of what we hear seems to proceed upon the assumption that we are the sole possessors of all that is worth while, and that the object to be sought is that the alien shall forget what he was and shall become what we are. Such a position is outlawed by the great truth of the catholicity of the Spirit. It savours too much of the old plea that the whole of God's truth is to be found in only one political system, in only one national ideal, and it forgets that the Spirit of God functions and operates as truly through other races and other systems as through our own. It is precisely this haughty attitude of superiority, of contempt of other races and political creeds, that is at the root of all our troubles. It is the unconscious assumption that we have a monopoly of truth, that breeds intolerance and injustice toward those who are of other races and of other creeds. But an Americanization such as this never will accomplish its purpose and never will bring peace to the people. That will come about only with the frank recognition that our nation's progress is to be a co-operative evolution in which every separate race and creed is to have its share; that the Spirit of the living God is poured out upon all flesh; that every people has in it some deposit of the divine life and mind; that it is our task to discover what it is; to have that special revelation in this land of promise and of freedom given the opportunity which it may have lacked elsewhere to grow into its full life and stature; to make that precious racial ideal a part of that full composite expression of a universal human ideal which this country seeks to exemplify, and to encourage by all means every race and people that comes to our shores to be true above all to itself, that we may gain that for which it stands as an organic part of that great whole for which we seek to stand—that is true Americanization. And when it is understood and practiced there will be no more contempt of the alien, but a spirit of sympathy and brotherhood born of the Whitsunday truth that the Spirit of God has indeed been poured out on all flesh.

For all of us this is a truth of immense practicalness. Let anyone ask himself how much it will enlarge his influence, give him the key to other men's lives who may differ radically from him in opinion, in religious ideas, or in manner of life, if he, carrying about with him always this persuasion that the Spirit of God has been poured out upon all flesh, holds that they may truly belong to the family of God who are not of his household of faith, or share in the particular forms or outward expression of that faith that are most dear to him. This is the distinguishing characteristic of the truly successful social worker who loves his foreign-born as truly as his native-born. Here lies the persuasiveness of the really effective preacher or prophet who never disparages essential religion wherever he finds it, claiming only that that faith will come, must come, with dearer, deeper, more compelling force, as it is consciously inspired and controlled by the Spirit of Christ Himself. This is the distinguishing trait of the Church of the Holy Spirit which never assumes that those without its walls are without the witness of the Spirit, but calls its children all men who are trying to walk and live by His Spirit everywhere. And this is the root inspiration of the man or woman anywhere of real influence in our modern world. Neither consciously nor unconsciously does he draw hard-and-fast lines of class or condition, of creed or colour, between himself and any other human soul, because he knows that the Spirit of God has been poured out upon all flesh and that therefore all men who are in any degree taught by that Spirit have their place in the inclusive family of God. Democracy will continue to be an unrealized social and spiritual ideal until this truth of the catholicity of the Spirit is understood and practiced by those who call themselves the children of God and followers of Jesus Christ.

IV

THE CHURCH OF THE SPIRIT

"And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost."
—*Acts 2. 4.*

IV

THE CHURCH OF THE SPIRIT

There is a peculiar interest attached to the beginnings of the Christian Church. By what means did the simple religion of Jesus expand and become the faith of the world? How was it that the little unorganized band of the disciples of Jesus grew into the early Christian Church? What was the secret of the expanding power of that faith which spread so rapidly through Palestine and Asia and the whole Roman Empire? What was the secret of that early enthusiasm which irresistibly overcame all obstacles and triumphed over all its foes? How can the Church to-day hope to recover the victorious optimism of the Church of the New Testament?

These are some of the questions which men have asked and sought to answer. The effort has been made on all sides to get at the secret of the extraordinary development and authority of the primitive Church. Did it lie in its beliefs? What were the special doctrines of the apostolic Church? Theologians have busied themselves with the answer; they have investigated the doctrines of the New Testament Church and they have spread them all before us. But it is impossible to find the secret of its vitality in its doctrines. When analyzed, these appear to be singularly simple. The Church had not begun to do its thinking. Christian theology had not yet been born. "Repent, and be baptized." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." This was the simple creed of the Church in the time of its great expansion as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles.

Or did its secret lie in its organization? How was it officered? To what modern ecclesiastical system does it most closely correspond? This question has called forth a vast amount of patient inquiry. Many different answers have been given to it. The scholars have argued with much learning. Were the presbyters simply pastors, or were they local bishops? Was the Church democratic in its organization at the beginning, or at the first did it have episcopal supervision and guidance? But it is impossible to account for the propagating power of the early Church as the basis of its organization. It was not yet in any distinct sense an ecclesia. It had not developed an institutional system.

The liturgists have asked what were its rites, its sacraments, the times and seasons of its worship and its services; the antiquarians have sought to discover its peculiar habits and customs—but these one and all have failed to reveal the secret of its vitality. It is like trying to dissect a rose to discover its perfume, or resorting to vivisection to discover life.

It is necessary for one to fall back upon the simple statement as we find it on the very first page of the history of the Church: "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost." A divine enthusiasm, which had for its source the very gift of the Holy Spirit of Christ Himself, this is as near as we can come to describing the secret of the early Church. It is very much better; it is very much more honest when all are seeking to explain certain evident phenomena to assign an adequate cause, however little we may be able to understand that cause, than to assign a reason which we can understand, but which is not able to account for the facts. And the facts as we all know them are these: that the extraordinary sweep and power of the primitive Church had their source and origin in the experience of the Church on its Day of Pentecost. "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost."

At least that is the explanation which the New Testament itself gives. When we look to the Book itself for the answer to the question—Whence came the power of the early Church? that is the answer that it gives. If we look to what Jesus has to say, we find Him saying this: "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."[1] "And, . . . [He] commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father."[2]

This also was the explanation which the disciples themselves gave. The one indispensable possession of a Christian in those days was that he had had his Day of Pentecost and had received the Holy Ghost. When they chose a man like Stephen it was because he was a man full of the Holy Spirit.[3] When they sent out apostles, it was because the Holy Ghost had separated them for this work.[4] Whenever the disciples did any great work, it was because the Holy Ghost was with them.[5] The first question asked of any company of believers was whether they had received the Holy Ghost. When people marvelled at the work of the apostles, and asked the secret of it, the answer was always the same, it was the gift of the Holy Ghost.

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[1] Acts 1. 8.

[2] Acts 1. 4.

This is the New Testament reason, and we may put it down as the real reason, for the expanding power of the Christian faith and the victorious career of the Christian Church.

But now, if we have answered one question, we have raised another. What was the Day of Pentecost? What was this experience which explains the power of the Christian faith and of the early Church?

We feel toward this as we do toward other narratives in the Bible, not that it is an accurate description of what actually happened, but that it describes, as nearly as human language is able to describe, the outer and visible accompaniment of an inward and spiritual event. When, years after the event, St. Luke, the author of this narrative, attempted to set forth what happened on that Day of Pentecost, he fell back on familiar figures of speech, and wrote that "There came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind" and that there appeared tongues like as of fire. But when we ask what really happened on the Day of Pentecost our answer will not be in terms of outer and spectacular happenings, but of inward and spiritual ones. Something did happen; something vital and real happened; something happened that made a vital and mighty difference in the lives of these disciples and the life of the world. What happened that day explains the power of the Christian faith and of the primitive Church. Something vital and real and momentous happened that marked an epoch in the lives of the disciples and in the life of the world. What happened on the Day of Pentecost has made all the difference in the world to your life and to mine. There is no need of being vague or in the dark about this. This is no legend and no ecclesiastical story and no tradition out of a dim past. It is something real and authentic and all-important. What happened on the Day of Pentecost was this: the religion taught by Jesus Christ and embodied in Jesus Christ became for all time a living, personal experience. The faith of Jesus became not a lesson to be learned with mind, not a truth to be accepted by the reason, not a beautiful memory, not something that belonged to the past. Henceforth they would not look back upon something outside of themselves which they would try to live up to; a ritual to be observed, a commandment to keep; a rule to be observed. The religion of Jesus became an inward experience, a source of personal power, a spiritual enthusiasm, a living fire, a quenchless spirit of hope and faith and love that all centered in and flowed forth from their apprehension of Christ, their fellowship with Him, their conviction of His living inward Personal Presence.

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[3] Acts 6. 5.
[4] Acts 13. 2.
[5] Acts 8. 15; 19. 2.

That, as nearly perhaps as we can describe it, is what happened on the Day of Pentecost. But that was everything. It changed the whole situation. Before that happened the disciples were dispersed, afterward they are united; then they were discouraged, now they are filled with hope; then they were timid, now they are bold; then they were ashamed of Christianity, now they proclaim Him openly; then they were half-hearted, now they go all lengths; then they found it hard to speak for Jesus, now they find it impossible not to; then they felt they must fail, now they know that they are to conquer.

Once it had been baptized by the Holy Ghost, nothing could withstand the power of the Christian Church, and its impact on that ancient world was simply irresistible. It must have looked then as it even looks now, like an unequal struggle. Think of the superhuman task of world-conquest set down before that little company of Christians as they go forth to win the world for Christ. In members they were a negligible quantity—a mere handful when the narrative opens—and never more than the merest fraction of the great encompassing population of the Eastern world. They were without wealth, prestige of any kind, standing, and influence, and the whole world was arrayed against them. They first felt the hostility of the Jews. They were put into prison, threatened, silenced, persecuted, and at least two fell early by the sword of Herod. But the Jews could not stop the onward sweep of the Christian faith. They met next the skeptical culture of Greece, which had been disseminated all through the ancient world and had captivated its best mind and thought, which examined with intellectual curiosity any new doctrine of God or man that might be taught, but appeared to be impenetrable to any message whose object was to pierce beneath the veneer of intellectual interest and grip the will, or to resuscitate the conscience, or in any real controlling sense lay hold of and order the life and remake and reform morals or conduct. But even the pervading culture of the Grecian world was no match for the spiritual power of the Christian faith. Above all, before this nascent faith, this new spiritual life as it incorporated itself in the little Christian community, this company of believers in Christ that we call the Church of the apostles, there lay the great colossal indifference of the pagan world. All the evidence goes to show that the Roman world at the first treated the new faith with negligent contempt. Not until the end of the first century did Christianity appear significant enough to merit the attention of political or intellectual Rome. The new faith had this inertness, this vast, imponderable indifference to meet and to overcome. Christianity was a cause for jest whenever it was noticed at all. It was threatened with suffocation by the sheer weight and mass of an apparently immovable and impenetrable neglect. Yet, like a bit of leaven, it continued to work and to effervesce in this vast, inert world in which it found itself, until its influence reached in all directions, had penetrated every class of society, and had laid the foundations of a new social order. Christianity in an incredibly short space of time had reached out into every part of the known world. It had been carried east and west, south into Africa, north into Gaul. The Jews could not stop it. Rome could not halt it. Greece could not overcome it. Worldliness and materialism could not overwhelm it. Baptized by the Power of the Holy Ghost, they went everywhere "and the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

Such was the Church of the Spirit. And such the Church of the Spirit has been through all the centuries that have intervened between that primitive Church and our modern world. For the Spirit has not been quenched, and all through the uninspired record of an arid ecclesiasticism, and a dead intellectualism, and a lifeless formalism there has run the red line of the Spirit, the witness of the devout souls in every age who have been filled with the Holy Ghost—the prophets, the martyrs, the mystics of the Church of the Spirit.

"A strange and varied fellowship they make, of many races, traditions and creeds, held in the unity of the Spirit of truth, witnesses of the life of God in the souls of men. They utter themselves in a unison of language which is neither ancient nor modern, but timeless, universal, one. Across the centuries speaks the Jew Philo: 'God has breathed into man from heaven a portion of His own divinity.' 'The soul of man is an indivisible portion of that divine and blessed Spirit'; and with this word of Hebrew wisdom is heard the prologue of the fourth Gospel, 'The life was the light of men.' A century passes, and Plotinus bears witness, 'The wise man recognizes the idea of the good within him; this he develops by the withdrawal into the holy place of his own soul.' Other centuries pass, and Bernard of Clairvaux, preacher, administrator, saint, gives testimony: 'It is in the Spirit not of sound, but of penetration, not talkative, but effective, that union with God occurs.' 'The word is not one of dinning the ears, but persuading the affections.' Still other centuries pass, and the Dominican Tauler preaches: 'When the mind is rightly directed, it tendeth toward this ground whose image is far beyond its power.' 'This revelation must take place in the Spirit; for God is a Spirit, and our created spirits must be united to and lost in the Uncreated.' So through the ages is renewed this serene message. 'Madam,' says the holy Franciscan to Madam Guyon, 'you are disappointed and perplexed because you seek without what you have within. Accustom yourself to seek God in your heart, and you will find Him'; and the pupil soon testifies, 'The soul passing out of itself, by dying to itself, necessarily passes into its divine object.' 'My own experience seemed to me a verification of this.' German theology begins its modern period with the declaration of Schleiermacher, that the Christian consciousness is the test of Christian truth, and that the sense of dependence upon God supplants all need of proof of the being of God; and German criticism recalls the saying of Richard Rothe, that 'next to the Bible as a help to the religious life stand the writings of the mystics.' Even across the broad and shadowless region of English thought, with its philosophy of utility and its theology of an Establishment, there strike at times these softer shadows of the witness of the Spirit, like soft clouds that fleck a treeless field. ‘Great things,’ writes George Fox, ‘did the Lord lead me into, and wonderful paths were opened unto me.’ ‘As people come into subjection to the Spirit of God, they receive the word of wisdom that opens all things, and come to know the hidden unity in the Eternal Being.’ Finally, the same strain of this tranquil music of the soul is heard amid the noise of commercialism in the New World, and is greeted with a peculiar responsiveness. How many souls in how many religious communions have been supported by Emerson’s confident words: ‘Within man is the soul of the holy, the wise silence, the universal beauty, the eternal one’! How many have sung to themselves the confessions of Jones Very:

‘In finding thee are all things round us found,
In losing thee are all things lost beside!’

How many have greeted with gratitude the words of Phillips Brooks, ‘It is a blessed thing that in all times there have always been men to whom religion has not presented itself as a system of doctrine, but as an elemental life in which the soul of man came into very direct and close communion with the soul of God’! ‘It is the mystics of every age who have done most to blend the love of truth and the love of man within the love of God, and so to keep alive or restore a healthy tolerance.’

“Thus, if we may give to the theological phrase a new significance, we may trace the long procession of the Holy Ghost, winding through the paths of Christian history, separated a little from the main body of believers, distrusted often for indifference to theological or ecclesiastical details, yet transmitting through the ages the apostolic succession of the spiritual life, testifying to the inner light which is the life of God, undisturbed among transitions of theology or conflict of sects, confident and forward-looking among the mysteries of life, because recalling the Master's promise that the Spirit of truth will lead them unto all truth."[6]

Is it possible for the Church to-day to recapture the secret of the primitive Church, to revive within it the Spirit which has always been the source of its inspiration and its power? It is our greatest need to-day. There is a tremendous amount of questioning to-day, some of which is audible, but much of which is inarticulate, concerning the present position and outlook of institutional Christianity.

A missionary, recently returned from his field in the Orient, said that he had travelled from the Atlantic to the Pacific and that he had encountered everywhere a feeling of pessimism about the status and influence of the Church. All of this lugubriousness seemed to concern itself with the conditions that confront the Church in our modern world. "I am disposed to think," writes a keen observer, himself a teacher of religion, "that a great and increasing portion of the moral worth of society lies outside of the Christian Church, and separated from it, not by godlessness, but rather by exceptional moral earnestness."

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[6] Quoted by permission from a published sermon by Francis Greenwood Peabody, D.D. The reader is referred to a subsequent volume, *The Church of the Spirit*, The Macmillan Company, 1926, bearing the same title, in which this distinguished author writes convincingly on this important subject.

Multitudes of good men, we are told, are dissatisfied. Their quarrel is not with this church or with that; they hold aloof from all. They are a kind of men whom Christianity has produced, who hold Christ in unfeigned reverence. They are not sure whether or not they accept the definitions of Him which the churches set forth in their formularies; they do not pretend that they could define better, although they feel that they would define less. But there they are, we are told, a large and ever-increasing number on whom the Church seems to have lost its hold. They see the churches concerning themselves with matters which seem unreal, which seem to have no relation to our most pressing spiritual and moral problems. Their doctrinal discussions appear remote and academic; their ecclesiastical differences appear petty and unimportant. Leaders of thought in our communities, we are told; educators, governors, legislators, teachers, judges are finding their way outside the walls and atmosphere of the Church. Here is a situation, we are reminded, different from any the Church has yet confronted, the presence of which may be called a characteristic feature of the present situation. Others, even more pessimistic, remind us that Protestantism is a spent force; that its rivalries and consequent wastefulness tend to render it impotent; that it has lost the controlling position which it once held among people of intellect and influence; that wage-earners have largely drifted beyond the sound of its voice; that an ever-increasing number of people who have been counted among its adherents have been quietly drifting away, not because of any hostility to the Church; not through indifference either, but because they do not perceive the necessity or the controlling importance of continuing their connection with it.

And aside from the alienation of any one group of the population, there are the general indifference, the callousness to spiritual ideals, the prevailing absorption in material interests and pleasure, the lack of appreciation and response to the call of faith and the summons to righteousness.

But if the story of the primitive Church tells us anything, it tells us this: if the Church ever fails to impress the world, the reason must not be sought in outward conditions, in the obtuseness or resistance of the world in which it seeks to bear its witness. To find in outer conditions and obstacles to progress the cause of the decline in Christianity and of the loss or failure of the Church is to reverse history and to contradict all that we know of the nature and spirit of the Christian faith. To explain the apparent apathy of institutional religion by pointing to existing conditions: the heterogeneous character of our American population; the masses of the people in our great cities; the prevailing materialism and laxity of the age; the bewildering advance in human knowledge; our restless commercial activity; the domination of physical sciences; the stubborn moral obtuseness of the masses; the insatiable modern desire for pleasures and excitement, or to any other outer phenomena —all of this is wholly beside the mark and is flatly untrue to all that we know of the real history of the Church and of the nature of Christianity. If that history tells us anything, it tells us that outward conditions have nothing to do with the inward prosperity of the Church or with the spiritual vitality of the Christian faith; or, rather, it tells us that when these conditions have been at their worst, the Church has been at its best. It tells us that when material obstacles have been most forbidding, then the Christian faith has risen to its highest and its best; that the gospel needs to be challenged, needs to be thrown back upon itself, needs to have opposition and apparently overwhelming and insuperable difficulties before it, in order to demonstrate its spiritual power, vindicate its divine origin, and show whence it came and what it is. And conversely it has been when Christianity has had no foes to face, no battles to wage, no great difficulties to overcome that the least splendid chapters of her life have been written. No situation could outwardly have been more forbidding than that which confronted the apostolic Church—and that is why it was apostolic. It was when the Roman Empire threatened the very existence of the Church that it rose to the sublime heights of faith which still fire the conscience of men when they read the book of the Revelation. It was when the Church of the Reformation was confronted with the Inquisition of Philip of Spain and the persecution of Mary of England that it wrote a record of heroism and of spiritual victory which will be inspiration of men for untold centuries. It was when England was apparently most insensible to spiritual appeal that John and Charles Wesley set it on fire with a revival of religion such as it had never known. It was when the state of religion in the American colonies was apparently at its lowest that the Pentecostal spirit of a Whitefield flamed to its highest. It is when the gospel is pushed, harassed, challenged, that it shows its real power. What is needed for the spiritual prosperity of the Church is some great work to do, some great cause to champion, some great odds to face, some great field to conquer.

From this point of view, our modern world means for Christian workers, for Christian believers, not a cause for discouragement but a cause for hope; not a reason to despair but a reason to rejoice; not a time for pessimism but a time for everlasting thanksgiving.

Thomas Chalmers once met a discouraged young minister at Glasgow. He had come from his country parish and felt lonely and depressed in the midst of the sordid conditions that confronted him in the great industrial city to which he had come. He was leaning on a parapet of a bridge crossing the Clyde when he felt a hand laid on his shoulder. Looking up, he saw Doctor Chalmers, who waved his arm toward the grimy, smoke-covered city and said, "Grand field of operations, that."

What a grand field of operations our modern world presents to a Church that is truly a Church of the Spirit! Whenever in the history of the world was such a challenging opportunity set before the face of the Church militant as in the day in which we live? At last the hour has struck for which the Church has been waiting. At last a great world-mission, greater than the world has ever known, confronts the Church and challenges her faith and fortitude. Nations are crowding to be born, and untold multitudes are struggling upward to the light of a new day and the vision of a new Hope. To baptize infant nations with the Spirit of the living Christ, to dissolve ancient racial barriers, give new meaning to patriotism, and to usher in a new human brotherhood and federation of mankind—when was such a mission set before the Christian Church? When in our own land did the Church ever confront such glorious odds, or face such spiritual opportunities as in the day in which we live? Just because our population is so great and is daily growing more complex; just because nation is jostling with nation within our borders and race is meeting face to face with race; just because our knowledge is becoming so vast and our possessions so great; just because our problems are becoming so many; just because our cities are growing with leaps and bounds; just because our industry is waxing strong and independent and our whole social order seems in turmoil, seething with new and unexpected life; just because religious idealism in every form seems threatened by the alien forces of greed and pleasure and possession—because of this every Pentecostal Christian should rejoice. For if the Church alone and the faith which it enshrines can make our modern world what it ought to be, let us remember that it is precisely this modern world of ours which will make the Church what it ought to be. The very conditions which seem to threaten its stability and to impede its progress will produce a finer faith, a purer and a holier Church than this world has yet seen or known. Let the Church but know its

Day of Pentecost, and let Christians everywhere be filled with the Holy Ghost, and the regenerating power of the gospel will be seen in all its brightness and splendour against a background which seems to many to be so dark and somber and hostile.

What, now, it must be asked, are the salient characteristics of the Church of the Spirit? By what signs may we know that a Church has indeed been filled with the Holy Ghost? If we carefully scan the record of the life of our primitive Church, we can hardly go wrong in our answer.

It was above all else a profoundly spiritual church. That is, the things of the Spirit overtopped all else in its interest and devotion. Matters of administration, forms of worship—these had their place, but that place was a subordinate one. One cannot discover that these matters loomed large in the program of the early Church. Its one passionate purpose was the discovery and transmission of the Spirit of Christ.

Thus the spiritual note dominated all its life and permeated every form of activity. It may have concerned itself with the distribution of alms; it cared for the poor; it cultivated a social democracy, a friendliness which included all conditions of men in one brotherhood; it emphasized the secular duties and political responsibilities of its members. Yet above all, beneath all, and running through it all there was the spiritual summons to a dedicated life, the spiritual message to the soul which was estranged from God by sin, and needed redemption and release from bondage to every earthly condition and need. The Church of the Spirit never exalts the secular to the place of the spiritual, and never forgets that its primary purpose and mission is to bring to men the salvation which comes from God in Christ to every human soul. It is at this point that one becomes most concerned—when one regards the program and purpose of many a church in our modern world. Too often the secular interest seems to have usurped the spiritual. Many churches seem to seek to rival the Rotary Clubs in their desire to furnish a certain kind of fellowship. They imitate amusement enterprises in their eagerness to entertain; they turn the pulpit into a platform for the discussion of all kinds of secular topics; they adopt promotion methods which have "worked" in the commercial world. They seek to create the impression that they are a "going" concern. And they relegate to a subordinate position the one purpose which gives them their true dignity and influence, which entitles them to the respect, confidence, and loyalty of men. The primary purpose of the Church is to bring to every separate soul redemption, and salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord. Its mission is primarily a spiritual mission. This does not mean that the Church will hold itself aloof from the secular interests in our modern world, that it will fail to apply the teachings of Jesus to every human interest. It does mean, however, that in its absorption in these matters, it will never forget that it is the custodian of a spiritual evangel, and it will never abandon its spiritual vantage ground.[7]

Again, the Church of the Spirit will be as broad and inclusive as the Spirit of Christ. It will never be a sectarian church. The church of the New Testament was such a Church of the Spirit. We read that "they were all of one accord." St. Paul kept warning the early Christian communities against a narrow exclusiveism. They must not say that they are of Paul, or Cephas, or Apollos, since all together were of Christ. There might be diversity of gifts, yet the same Spirit. Each separate organization was only a part of the larger, inclusive Church of the Spirit.

Such has always been the characteristic of the Church of the Spirit. It is precisely as the gift of the Spirit is lacking, that a church elevates the lesser matters of form and organization to a position which does not belong to them. This is not to say that these do not have their importance; it is not to say that one form of organization is as good as another, one form of worship as helpful as another. But it is to say that wherever Christ is, there is the Church; that the Church of the Spirit is broader and more inclusive than any existing ecclesiastical organization; that it includes within the ample and hospitable household of faith all who have been touched and filled with the Spirit of Christ.

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[7] For a full discussion of this important subject, see the author's *The Christian Church in the Modern World*, Chapter IV, "The Mission of the Church."

Francis T. Palgrave has well described the Church of the Spirit in his beautiful hymn:

"Where'er the gentle heart
  Finds courage from above;
Where'er the heart forsook
  Warms with the breath of love;
Where faith bids fear depart,
City of God! thou art.

"Thou art where'er the proud
  In humbleness melts down;
Where self itself yields up;
  Where martyrs win their crown;
Where faithful souls possess
Themselves in perfect peace.

"Where in life's common ways
  With cheerful feet we go;
Where in His steps we tread
  Who trod the way of woe;
Where He is in the heart,
City of God! thou art."

No church which is sectarian in its purpose or outlook, which is more concerned about denominational prerogative than spiritual victory, can be called a Church of the Spirit. Not until we have learned to subordinate the lesser matters of form and system and find ourselves united in the larger spiritual purpose that controlled the imagination of the primitive Church can we hope to recover its vitality and power.

A striking illustration of the possibility of uniting loyalty to the church of one's own upbringing and conviction with larger loyalty to the Church of the Spirit is found in the conversations of Samuel Johnson, as recorded by Boswell. Johnson from his birth was a devoted member of the Church of England. That devotion did not lessen, it deepened, as life went on. Yet he was increasingly catholic in his spiritual sympathies. He had a profound appreciation of Methodism, which was then beginning to influence the religious life of England. "The Methodists," he said, "owe their power to their ability to express themselves in a clear, familiar manner which is the only way to do good to the common people." "Indeed," Boswell adds, "Johnson was himself 'in a dignified manner' a Methodist, for he was methodical in the cultivation of his own inward spiritual life."[8] Yet on another occasion, Johnson spoke with such warmth of sympathy of the Roman Church, that the woman with whom he was conversing believed to the end of her life that he himself was a Roman Catholic. It is in proportion as the members of all churches can unite with devotion to their own church such an irenic and inclusive temper of mind, that the church of to-day will become the Church of the Spirit.

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[8] Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, Ed. 1865, Vol. 1, p. 365, and note.

Again, the Church of the Spirit is always a vocal Church. Its disciples are always voicing the faith which animates and controls their lives. It is a witnessing Church. The early disciples could but speak the things which they had seen and heard, and when a Church is filled with the Spirit, it speaks and it sings its faith into the heart of an unbelieving world. The Church of the Spirit is never dumb.

Not long ago a man said that if someone came into his place of business who was a Socialist, one found it out within twenty-four hours; if he was a member of a labour union, one discovered it inside of a week, but that he could be a church member without anyone knowing anything about it from one year's end to another.

It was not so in the early Church, and it will not be so when the Church to-day is filled with the Spirit. Conversational evangelism has always been a potent means for the transmission of faith, and it is a gift which has been too long neglected by the Church. Let anyone, without ostentation and without argument, speak simply of the faith which animates and controls his life, and he will be giving evidence of the Truth which will have convincing power. The

Church of the Spirit is never a silent church, except in prayer.

Its preachers are heralds. They announce salvation as did the apostles. Too much modern preaching lacks all propagating power. "Sir," said the verger of an English university church, "I have listened to sermons in this church for fifty years, and I still believe in God." But Pentecostal preaching causes people to listen and to discover a reality behind the preaching which they yearned and longed to possess. The primitive preachers did not offer the world a dead faith, but a living faith; they did not preach a philosophy or theology, but a gospel of deliverance, of freedom and of life—to those who believed on His name. Filled with the Holy Ghost, the early Church preached Jesus, whose life is a witness of how men may live; whose death is a witness of what God has done; whose resurrection is a witness of what men shall be—who brings a gospel to the poor, heals the brokenhearted, brings deliverance to the captives, restores sight to the blind, sets the bruised at liberty, and preaches the acceptable Day of the Lord.

And filled with the Holy Ghost that is the gospel which the Church will still utter. Apostolic preaching tells men to-day that they need God; that they are in moral and spiritual danger of being alienated from God, or separated in their purposes, ambitions, aims, and destiny from Him; and it offers them the same Jesus Christ, not as a figure of speech, not as a statement of doctrine, but as a living, present strength and power.

Once more, the Church of the Spirit is missionary in its motive and character. Such was the primitive Church. There is constant movement and pressure on the part of that Church from within—to the world without. Judæa, Jerusalem, Samaria, Antioch, Asia—the ends of the earth, so the story goes. Its look is forward, onward, outward. Its activities are not self-centered, but world-centered. Its interests are not local, they are universal. Its ambitions are not parochial, they are imperial. Its purpose is not to see what it may become, but what it may accomplish. Its whole life is wrapped up and permeated with the sacrificial Spirit, giving, bearing, sharing, carrying its faith to all the world. In the early Christian Church there was a kind of vitality, a contagion of enthusiasm whenever its members came together. It was all very vital living; they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.

It is not difficult to know when a church has had its Day of Pentecost. What is it doing? In God's name what is it doing? Is it consuming its energies in fruitless theological controversy? "What conclusions these controversies may come to," lately said a brave leader in a sorely embarrassed church, "is of no consequence. The only important thing is that they shall come to an end."[9] Is it busy about its own little parochial affairs, nervously active about its own denominational interests? Is it trying to bolster itself up in a community by making itself attractive? Devoting the major amount of its efforts upon itself, or having only a languid interest in what becomes of the world outside? Listening to Macedonian calls on every hand with indifferent ear, providing itself with every accommodation, and giving a farthing for the want of a word?

No wonder such a church is feeble. It ought to be. This world has no use for it, no place for it. What such a church needs is to be filled with the Holy Ghost, and when it is, it will begin to seek and save the lost; it will find its mission to be Christ's mission, and when it recovers its mission, and discovers its real place and purpose in the world, it will get back its power.

Doctor Hadfield, in his essay on the "Psychology of Power," in Canon Streeter's volume entitled *The Spirit,* touches on the sore place in our present-day religion, and as unerringly puts his finger on the remedy:

"In its fundamental doctrine of love to God and man, Christianity harmonizes the emotions of the soul into one inspiring purpose, thereby abolishing all conflict, and liberating instead of suppressing the free energies of men. In its doctrine of the Spirit it emphasizes the element of power in religion. No reader of the New Testament can fail to be struck by the constant reiteration in different forms of the idea that the normal experience of a Christian at that epoch was enhancement of power—'I can do all things'—an enhancement attributed by them to the operation in and through them of a divine energy to which the community gave the name of the 'Spirit'—'Ye shall receive power.' Pentecost, the healing miracles of the apostolic age, the triumphant progress of the religion through the Roman Empire, the heroic deeds of saints and martyrs—all these point to the sense of a power newly discovered. In contrast, looking at the Church of to-day, one cannot but be struck with its powerlessness. It contains men of intellect; it produces a type of piety and devotion that one cannot but admire; it sacrifices itself in works of kindness and beneficence; but even its best friends would not claim that it inspires in the world the sense of power. What strikes one is its impotence and failure. This want of inspiration and power is associated with the fact that men no longer believe in the existence of the Spirit in any effective, practical way. They believe in God the Father, and they are reverent; they believe in God the Son, and the Church numbers among its members millions who humbly try to 'follow in His steps'; but for all practical purposes they are like that little band at

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[9] Francis Greenwood Peabody, *The Church of the Spirit.* Reprinted by permission of The Macmillan Company.

Ephesus who had 'not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost,' and, lacking the inspiration of such a belief, they are weak and wonder why." [10] When Carey of India was still cobbler, schoolmaster, and preacher in a village in England, he had a map of the world hanging on the walls of his room. One Sunday he preached a sermon on the duty of the Church to carry the gospel into all the world. The congregation listened reverently and then quietly dispersed, but Carey, disturbed and distressed, followed them out of the church. "But," he said to one of them, "aren't they going to do anything about it?" The word was passed from one to another; the congregation re-entered the church, and then and there the foreign missionary enterprise was born in England. The Church of the Spirit does something about it.

J. Wilbur Chapman once remarked that the Church needs to take a lesson in grammar. It needs to recover the use of the period in place of the interrogation point. It needs to use the imperative mood. "Go," "speak," "seek," "save." And it needs to learn the possessive case: All things are yours, for "ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

The Church of the Spirit is one which has well learned its lesson in spiritual grammar.

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[10] The Macmillan Company, London, 1919, pp. 111, 112. Used by permission.

V

THE LANGUAGE OF THE SPIRIT

"Every man heard them speak in his own language."—*Acts 2. 6.*

V

THE LANGUAGE OF THE SPIRIT

THE story of what happened on the first Day of Pentecost is told us in the second chapter of the Acts. The day was Sunday. The place was the upper room where Christ had told His disciples to remain until the promise of the Father should be fulfilled. They were all together, we read. And by "all" we may understand either the disciples or the one hundred and twenty who believed and were banded together. And then we read of a sound as of mighty wind and a tongue of fire which sat upon each one of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.

How are we to understand this scene? Is it to be taken literally, or is it imagery? Or what does it mean? In the description of this scene, as in the description of other wonderful events in the Bible, we need to remember that the men who described them were writing under the limitations of human expression, and of human speech. It is one thing to have an experience, but it is another thing to describe it. The experience may be as real and true to us as daylight, but when we come to describe it, we face the inadequacy of speech and words.

It is just so in the New Testament. If we will read it carefully, we will find the New Testament writers labouring under this same difficulty; we find them using the expression, "as it were," or "as if." Take for an example the scene of the baptism of Jesus when the theophany occurred, the opening of the heavens and the audible voice, and the coming of the Spirit which descended upon Christ. "I beheld," said John, "the Spirit descending like a dove upon him." That was as near, that is, as he could come to describing it. Similarly, we read of Christ's sufferings in the garden. "His sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood."

Now, if readers of the New Testament rendered account of the significance of these words "like," "as," "as of," "as it were," they would not be inclined to push too strictly the precise terms in which these great experiences were described.

St. Luke, who wrote the account of what happened in that upper room, is very careful in his use of language. He was not there himself. Those who were, described what happened. They said there was a sound "as of" a rushing mighty wind; that tongues appeared "like as of fire." But they did not say, and St. Luke did not report them as saying, that there was an actual wind, or visible flames of fire.

Wind had always been a symbol of the Divine Presence to the Jews. "He flew swiftly," wrote the psalmist, "as the wings of the wind."[1] A great strong wind preceded the still small voice which was heard by Elijah in the cave.[2] Indeed, the very word in the Hebrew for spirit means literally "breath." Our Lord used the same figure of speech when He said, "The wind bloweth where it listeth. So is everyone that is born of the Spirit."[3] Similarly, the figure of fire was a familiar one to describe the Presence and the Spirit of God. It was in the flaming bush that the Lord appeared to Moses; He descended on Sinai in the midst of flames, thunderings, and lightnings. He is called a consuming fire, and in fire He appeared to His prophets. Thus it was said of Jesus that He should baptize His disciples with the Holy Ghost and with fire.

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[1] Psalm 104. 3.

What, then, more natural than when this experience of the disciples was described, those figures and forms of speech should be used which by their people for generations had been used to describe the Divine Presence? When they were asked what happened in that upper room they simply fell back on these modes of expression which were familiar alike to them and to those to whom they spoke and wrote, and they said, "It was as of a rushing, mighty wind, and tongues like as of fire."

There is one more remarkable phenomenon connected with that first Christian Pentecost.

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[2] 1 Kings 19. 11.
[3] St. John 3. 8.

We are told that after receiving the Holy Ghost these disciples preached so that every man in that great cosmopolitan and polyglot assembly heard them speaking in his own language. What are we to make of this feature of the Day of Pentecost? Does it mean that the disciples actually spoke in all manner of foreign languages? And if so, how are we to understand and interpret such a miracle as that?

A reading of this second chapter of the Acts certainly does convey the impression that it was in foreign languages with which up to this time they had been unfamiliar that the disciples spoke when they had received the Holy Ghost. The words "as of," "like," do not occur in this connection. And if we had this chapter alone to go by, there would seem to be nothing else for us to believe than that this was indeed the outstanding miracle of the Day of Pentecost. But if we read the rest of the book of Acts, and, indeed, the rest of the New Testament, we find not only that there was no repetition of such a power to speak in foreign tongues, but, what is more significant, there is no single reference made elsewhere to this extraordinary gift, and there is no use made of this incident later in the New Testament. Even in Peter's discourse which follows, he makes no reference to what, had it actually occurred, must have seemed to all present to have been proof of a divine power. Rather, Peter used the preaching of the apostles as proof of the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy, where no allusion is made to any such phenomenon.

All of the evidence outside of a few verses in this chapter, therefore, goes to prove that the disciples did not actually speak in foreign languages on the Day of Pentecost. These few verses, however, contain positive evidence that they did speak in a way and with a message that confounded and amazed those who listened to them.

For if we are permitted to believe that there was no such outward miracle on the Day of Pentecost, let us not overlook the fact that there was a spiritual miracle. If it is not necessary to believe that they actually spoke in foreign tongues, let us remember that by the power of the Holy Ghost they were enabled to speak a spiritual language that could be universally understood. It was indeed true that when those disciples preached on the Day of Pentecost every man heard them speak in his own language. It was a mixed multitude, and when the disciples spoke the Far East was there, and so was Rome; from the cold mountains of Phrygia as well as from the broiling deserts of Arabia they had come. They were as different as men could be in outward ways and habits of life and mind. Yet underneath it all there was the one common humanity that made them brothers. All were children of the one God; all were alike in their sense of sin and of need; sorrow and suffering were common to them all; the desire for life and the shrinking from death; they all knew it together. And it was to what was common to them all that the disciples spoke at Pentecost. They did not use a dialect which might have been understood by a part of that multitude, but would have meant nothing to the rest; rather, they spoke in the universal vernacular of the human heart; they spoke of the love of God; they spoke of the forgiveness of sin; they spoke of redemption from death; they held out the promise of everlasting life; they preached Jesus the Saviour from sin and death; they uttered a universal gospel. And no one in all that multitude had ever heard speech like that. It seemed to each one as if that sermon on the Day of Pentecost were addressed to him. Taught by the Holy Ghost, these Pentecostal preachers were able to penetrate beneath all outward differences, and to talk the language of the human heart—"and every man heard them speak in his own language."

That was the real miracle of the Day of Pentecost, and it was only by the baptism of the Holy Ghost that the disciples were able to address that heterogeneous multitude as if they were one man—it was the language of the Spirit.

That was the language which Jesus used. Scholars have asked, did He speak in Hebrew or Aramaic? Did He know, or use, the Greek? It is all beside the point. When He spoke every man heard Him speak in his own language. Jesus never spoke in a dialect which some men could understand, but not others. Bartimæus, the beggar, understood Him, but so did Zacchæus, the publican. To the woman of Samaria it seemed as if He were talking in her language, but to Nicodemus it seemed also as if He were talking in his; the centurion thought that He answered directly to him, but to Nathanael it seemed clear that Christ had spoken to his thought. High or low, rich or poor, cultured or ignorant, the language of Christ was equally understood by them all. Everyone heard Him speak, as it were, in his own language—for it was the language of the Spirit. And when the Spirit of Jesus came upon the disciples they learned to talk His language. This was a far more wonderful thing than if they had spoken in foreign tongues. That would have astonished, but it would not have converted. It would have made men marvel, but it would not have made them better men. It would have happened once, but it would not have continued to do the work of God. To talk this universal language was more difficult than to talk a foreign language, and it was infinitely more useful. And this was the real miracle of the Day of Pentecost.

That miracle has been repeated again and again, whenever any disciple has been taught by the Holy Spirit of God. It was the continuing miracle of the New Testament. Into these early congregations were gathered men and women from every walk in life; yet every man heard the message, as it were, in his own language. When St. Paul spoke, Onesimus, a poor slave, understood him as well as Philemon, his rich master; Lydia, the well-to-do woman, and the jailer at Philippi responded at the same time. The apostles continued to speak, not in a dialect that a few could grasp, but in a vernacular that everyone could understand.

This was the continuing miracle of the Day of Pentecost. To understand how much of a miracle it was, let one look about in that ancient world, and find any others except these Galilæan fishermen, except these Spirit-taught Christians, who were able to do the same thing. The Jewish teachers were not talking so that everyone could understand; there were plenty of people who could make nothing out of what they had to say. The Greek and Roman philosophers were talking a dialect that a few rejoiced in, but that the multitudes cared nothing about; no one seemed to be able to talk in a tongue that would reach everyone until on the Day of Pentecost there leaped forth from the human heart, and there fell from human lips, a speech that touched the hearts of that great conglomerate multitude in a new and wonderful way and caused them to look at each other in astonishment. And they were all "confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language."

All great workers for Christ have first learned to speak the language of Christ. One of the greatest obstacles to the Christianization of the world is the dissimilarity of languages. Missionaries must spend long, hard years of study before they can learn to speak the language of those whom they have gone to help. But though one learns to speak the tongue of men and of angels, though he can talk Chinese, Turkish, or Marathi and has not learned to speak the language of the Spirit of Jesus, it profiteth him nothing. But if he has learned to talk the language of the Spirit, his inability to talk in the dialect of men will not limit his influence and power.

The secret of the success of St. Francis Xavier, it is said, and of the amazing conquests which he won for Christ, was that he had command of the universal language of love and of faith. When Livingstone went into Africa, his friends thought that he was a fool to go where the white man had never been, and where the English language could not be understood, but Livingstone had learned a language more musical and more universal than his mother tongue—he had learned to speak the language of Jesus, the language of the Spirit. Did they understand him? Read the record of his life and you will find that he was not only understood, but loved, with an undying devotion, by those black men whom he befriended.

It is only as missionaries learn to speak the language of the Spirit that their work can be effective, for this is the only language that is universally understood. There may be a good deal in the theology of the West which the East cannot understand; there may be many interpretations of Christian truth to which it cannot respond, but let the missionary of the Cross utter in living deeds the Spirit of Jesus, and everyone to whom he goes hears him speak in his own language. There are more languages actually spoken by missionaries to-day than were represented in that first Pentecostal multitude. The Bible is translated in more dialects to-day than were spoken then, and the number is constantly increasing. But beneath every language that is used, and every dialect that is spoken, there must run that spiritual vernacular that is understood by every human heart, if the message of the love of God in Jesus is to be understood.

A missionary in China once went to a remote region and gathered a group of natives together and began to tell them the story of Jesus, the good Man who loved His fellow men, and died to save them. When he had finished, one of the natives said: "We know that man. He lived among us here years ago during the time of the great plague. When everyone else forsook us, he stayed and helped us, and died for us. Come, we will show you where he is buried." And the old native took the missionary out of the gates and showed him the grave of a young Oxford graduate who had come out there and had spoken the language of the Spirit, a language which everyone had understood.

Preachers need to learn the language of Jesus. The reason so much preaching is ineffective is that it is in a language which people cannot understand. No part of a man is more sensitive to his surroundings than his vocabulary. One naturally speaks the language with which his ears and eyes are most familiar. Unconsciously to himself the student acquires a vocabulary and diction totally different from that of other people. Many a man has come from college and the seminary with his vocabulary so Latinized and Germanized that he has seemed to the common people like a foreigner or a pedant. The first essential of effective preaching is that every man shall hear it in the language in which he himself was born. There never was, and never will be, a Pentecost where this is lacking. No man truly preaches, who does not reach the heart, and the language of the Spirit is the language by which the hearts are reached. But when a preacher has learned to speak the language of the Spirit his listeners crowd around him and say in surprise that the sermon has been fashioned in some strange way to fit their case. They are all confounded, saying: "How hear we every man in our own tongue wherein we were born?"

That was the language which Moody spoke, and Brooks and Spurgeon and Drummond and Beecher. These men differed widely in their thought and in their style and modes of expression, but every one of them had been so taught by the Holy Spirit that he could speak the universal language of the human heart.

Every Christian man and woman needs to learn to speak the language of Jesus. How many languages can you speak? It is considered to be a wonderful gift if one can speak in more languages than his own. To speak a foreign language is the ambition of many people. Some, it is said, are so gifted that they can speak fluently a dozen foreign languages. It is indeed a wonderful gift. But there is something even more wonderful than that. Even a dozen languages would not enable you to talk to everyone. But if you learn to speak the language of Jesus, the language of sympathy, of faith, of loving thoughts and deeds, then you are talking in a language that everyone can understand.

Some languages are hard to learn. Some languages are harder to learn than others, but perhaps the hardest thing for anyone to do, from a human point of view, is to be able to talk in this universal language. Who can so rid himself of his inbred predispositions, overcome his natural sectionalism, divorce himself of his prejudices, become liberated from the class-ideas in which he was born and reared, so that he can talk in a language that everyone can understand?

This one speaks an academic language; another in the dialect of the practical man of affairs; another in the tongue of society. Nothing surprises us more when we move out of our little set than to discover that other people are talking a language entirely different from our own. We simply do not understand them. They simply do not understand us. Between us there is a great gulf fixed. And it is an exceedingly rare and difficult and beautiful thing when you see one who can move anywhere in the diverse and opposite groups of people that make up our modern world, and talk in a language that anyone can understand.

In learning languages so much depends on the person. Some say: "I am not good at languages. I like science, or history, or mathematics, but I am not able to acquire languages. I am slow and dull." But how wonderful it is to think that this, the most difficult language of all to learn, anyone may learn who will. You may have a hard time with Latin or Greek, you may stammer over your French or Italian, but the language of Jesus you may learn if you will. Think of the men who have learned it. How dull they were!—Philip and Andrew, plain fisher folk; Peter and John, no scholars at all; John Bunyan and Whitefield—a peddler and a barkeeper; Livingstone—a mill-hand; and Carey, a cobbler; and Moody, a clerk. Yet these men learned to speak that language perfectly. Everyone understood them.

We have such a wonderful Teacher! So much depends upon the teacher. You learn conversation from your teacher. And Jesus walks with us and He talks to us, and we talk to Him, and then one day we get a baptism of His Spirit, and we speak, and everyone is confounded because he hears us speak in his own language.

The secret of influence depends upon acquiring the language of Jesus. No one is qualified to be a saviour of men unless he has learned to talk in the language of the Spirit. Until then we are shut in, shut off, shut out, shut away from our fellow men. The heart of man is very sensitive. His ear is very keen. We have no more than opened our mouth than the other knows whether we can talk in the language in which he was born. But then, down deep in the human heart is the craving to be understood; the inarticulate longing for someone to come and speak in the one language that is clear and authoritative and comprehending. And if one hears the language of Jesus; if one recognizes the accent of Christ; if one knows that he is hearing the winsome language of love and faith, then the porter opens the door—that jealous porter that guards the soul against all others—and then the secret of influence, the power of helpfulness begins. And it can be had in no other way.

We have often felt how unable we are to do this. We seem shut in, limited, hindered from having the influence, speaking the word, living the life we would, the persuasive life, the winning life, the life that should persuade and win others into the way of truth. Why is it? we have often asked ourselves. Is it not that we have been speaking our own language so that others could not understand us, instead of the language of the Spirit that alone they can understand? Is not the prayer that we need to offer, not that we may be more gifted, or more brave, but that we may have that sympathy, that insight, and that power that comes only because the Spirit of Jesus dwelleth in us? Our deepest need, if we aspire to be serviceable men and women, is that we shall be able to speak the language of the Spirit. And no man ever yet spoke that language who had not had his Day of Pentecost, who had not been filled with the Spirit of Jesus.

VI

THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT

"Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?"—*Genesis 41. 38.*

VI

THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT

"ONE of the most striking characteristics of Christian theology is the subordinate place which has been, as a rule, assigned to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. The Trinitarian formula, which has for many centuries represented the faith of the vast majority of the Christian Church, announces the relationship of three equal and separate manifestations of the Godhead to each of which the devotions of Christians may with equal fitness turn. In the practical piety, however, of great numbers of believers the thought of the divine Fatherhood and the recognition of the work of the Spirit have been in a large degree dominated by the peculiar power and persuasiveness of the doctrine of the Son."[1]

There is some question whether this statement of the case is accurate so far as it concerns the thought of the divine Fatherhood. Indeed, the "practical piety" of many people to-day turns most naturally to God the Father. Christian people are often perplexed because they deal practically with God, and seem to have so little place in their practice of devotion and prayer with the Person of Jesus. That God is a Person does not seem incredible, and the Personality of God does not seem vague or unreal. They may not be able to visualize that Personality any more than they are able to explain or define it, but since personality is the highest attribute of human life, it seems natural to ascribe it to the divine life. And from childhood they have been accustomed in thought and in prayer to treat God as a Person, to relate themselves to God as a child to its Father.

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[1] Francis Greenwood Peabody, *The Church of the Spirit.* Unitarian Publishing Society, Boston.

There can be no question, however, that to the overwhelming number of Christian people the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, as one of the manifestations of God, equal with Father and Son, has seemed vague and unreal, or that their "practical piety" has made little use of the third member of the Godhead. They rarely think of the Spirit as a "person" at all. Neither do they grasp the distinctiveness of the Spirit as a separate divine Being.

In the New Testament, however, the Holy Spirit, from the first, had a separate reality, a personalness, as distinct, as unique, as that of the Son. Uniformly the Spirit is personified, and the pronoun "He," and not "It," is used when the Spirit is mentioned. It is true that the New Testament does not theologize about the Spirit, as it does about the Son. The beginnings of that long history of thought which resulted in making the Son coequal with the Father may be found in the pages of the New Testament. But Christian thought did not concern itself in the same way about the Holy Spirit until later. Yet it was bound to do so, and in the same way. It was a sure instinct which caused Christian theology to find the same place in the Godhead for the Spirit which it had found for the Son. All through the fabric of the world and of human life there has been a threeness. In the physical world there are the three dimensions; in human life three functions—mind, will, and feeling. Just so in the Godhead, the sum of all existence, Christian thinking has found permanent place for Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

For the practical religious living of those who seek to know Christian truth, however, it is unnecessary to follow the process of thought by which this conclusion was reached. It is necessary, however, not to overlook or to neglect the practical meaning and importance of the doctrine of the Spirit. "It is the witness of the life of God in the soul of man. It is the immanent Deity, the progressive revelation, the undeparting and undiminished inspiration." As God the Father is the God above and around us, as Jesus Christ, His Son, is beside us, so the Holy Spirit is within us, guiding us unto all Truth.

The Spirit is indistinguishably the Spirit of God and of Christ. The Holy Ghost "proceedeth from the Father and the Son," as the Creed profoundly repeats, "and through that procession of the Holy Ghost the life of God is to reveal itself from age to age." And no human life has appropriated the full life of God until it knows Him and receives Him in all three of His possible manifestations to the soul of man.

The great need of the age is men who have been thus filled with the Spirit of God. It has been the great need of every age. Away back in the book of Genesis we find Pharaoh saying that what he needed was a man in whom the Spirit of God is. He had dreamed his dream, and Joseph had interpreted it. There were to be seven years of plenty followed by seven years of want, and the meaning of the dream was plain. It was plain also what was to be done. The fifth part of the harvest during the seven years of plenty must be gathered up and the food must be kept in store against the seven years of want, "that the land perish not through the famine."

Then Pharaoh breathed this prayer. And the real meaning of it comes out by contrasting it with the words of the preceding verse: "And the thing was good in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of all his servants." The plan was a perfect plan. What was needed was someone to work it. The plan was of no use unless there was a God-like man to operate it.

It is the prayer which one offers who looks out upon the complex and troubled life of our modern world. There is much that needs to be done. Everybody knows it. Politics needs to be purified; our industrial world needs to be pacified; our social life needs to be simplified; our whole world needs to be unified—everybody sees what ought to be done, and plans abound—good-looking plans, plans that look good in the eyes of our modern leaders and of their servants. And then the prayer goes up, "Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?"

We can do nothing without men and women who have the Spirit of God in them. Good-looking plans are useless; promising panaceas are hopeless; political theories are valueless unless we have the right men to work them. As Herbert Spencer once said, "You cannot make the Golden Age out of a leaden man."

The plan of Joseph would have broken down overnight if there had not been a Joseph to work it. Pharaoh was helpless with all of his gold and power, and so were his astrologers and necromancers and soothsayers. And so are our theorists and doctrinaires. Joseph—a man who had the Spirit of God in him—was the saving factor then, and men and women who are filled with the Spirit are the saving factor now. These to-day, as in every day, are they who possess the power to influence and to direct the destiny of the world in which they live.

In general, it may be said that three qualities are indispensable to one whose life is to count in any effective way in the world in which he lives. The first is spiritual insight; the second is intellectual penetration; the third is moral passion.

A man in whom the Spirit of God is has spiritual insight; by this is meant that he has his own personal experience of God, his own personal vision and knowledge of Him. Such a man has an abiding sense of being under divine control. This becomes the ruling motive of his life. He acts under a sense of divine commission and appointment.

Spiritual insight was the first Gift of Pentecost to the followers of Jesus. Henceforth, to borrow a phrase of John Henry Jowett, these men were gifted with "an extraordinary power of spiritual apprehension." By this is meant that they laid hold of God as a living reality, whereas heretofore He had been to them more or less a distant, or a conventional, or an obscure, or an abstract Idea. Now, there is a difference; there is an immense difference. It made an immense difference to them; it makes simply an immense difference to men and women to-day. One must remember that these men were born and reared in the idea of God. It was a part of their Hebrew birthright; it was as much a part of their inheritance as their physiognomy, or any other of their racial traits. The Jehovah of

Israel was as much a matter of course to them as the air they breathed or the land in which they lived. And yet we can read the Gospels through without discovering that these men were actually swayed or controlled or directed by a sense of the immediate presence of God in their lives. But after the Day of Pentecost that was all changed. In the book of the Acts we find that these same men have a certain "powerful, exquisite, and delicate feeling for God." God was forever breaking through on their lives, telling them what to do, and where to go, and what to speak, urging them forward, filling their lives, actually controlling and directing their steps. They lived, moved, and had their being in an overwhelming and immediate sense of God as a near and living reality. This spiritual insight was the secret of their power and influence. Nothing can stop or defeat a soul that is operating under an overwhelming sense of divine control.

It is for such men and women, in whom the Spirit of God is, that the world is waiting today. "The earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God." [2] There are in the world many clean and capable people, many who are intelligent and instructed, equipped with knowledge of secular science and history and of the constitution of human society. Yet these are without the power of influence because they are devoid of spiritual insight. It is impossible to discover a man or woman in history who did much in the world who did not have the consciousness that there is something greater than the world. To move the world to better things, to lift it to nobler purposes, to be among those who are the helpers and healers of mankind, it is necessary to have a spiritual vantage ground outside of oneself, and outside of the earth, and that vantage ground is God.

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[2] Romans 8. 19.

The supreme illustration of this truth is found in the life of Jesus. Baptized and filled with the Spirit, He performed His mission in the secure and confident conviction that He was fulfilling not His own will, but the will of God who sent Him. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."[3] "The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."[4] Thus Jesus defined the source of His inspiration and the secret of His power. And this was to be the secret of the power of His disciples also. "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you. . . . the Spirit of truth."[5] "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you."[6]

Broadly speaking, it may be affirmed that the men and women of history who have profoundly and permanently influenced the world for good have been religious men and women in the sense that the Spirit of God has operated in them and through them. They have not laboured in vain, because in a real sense they have been labourers together with God. Their lives have been directed and their work has been ordered under a profound conviction that they were not living for themselves, and that their work was not self-imagined, but that through them there were being wrought into the fabric of this world's life and thought the ulterior purposes, the very will of God.

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[3] St. John 5. 17.

[4] St. John 14. 10.

[5] St. John 14. 16, 17.

[6] Acts 1. 8.

In proportion as this spiritual conviction possesses a human soul; in proportion as one labours under it and is directed by it—in short, in proportion as the Spirit of God is in a man as the source and inspiration of his activity, that man possesses the power to influence for righteousness the world in which he lives.

In the next place, a man in whom the Spirit of God is, has intellectual penetration. To have the power of influence, a mind is needed that will pierce like a rapier the false popular notions of the day in which one lives. One must bring sheer intellectual sincerity and honesty to bear upon all the social and political standards and problems of one's time. No man can mean much to the world whose mind is not capable of this high performance. The mind of Jesus was like a two-edged sword. His clear critical insight reached the center of the conventional morality of His day. He passed in review the national, racial, moral, and religious prejudices of His time and pronounced judgment upon them. And when the Spirit of Jesus descended upon the apostles, we find them capable of the same high performance. Sufficient justice is not done to the intellectual quality of the New Testament teaching, which, in a world of false religious ideas, of defective social ideals, was able to fashion a faith and a morality which has never since been transcended. Filled with the Spirit, they were capable of an intellectual detachment which enabled them to judge with precision between the temporary and the permanent, the partial and the complete, the false and the true ideas upon which personal and social welfare may be said to depend.

When men are filled with the Spirit they possess the mind of Christ. They are capable of clear and independent thinking. They have the quality of intellectual sincerity. For want of this, many people in our modern world lack the power of leadership and influence. "Most people's ideas are simply the pale and timid reflex of current and popular opinion. They are the result of suggestion, using that word in its psychological sense. The 'suggestions' are received unquestioned and unexamined. They tend to form a solid precipitation in the bottom of men's minds. [Such persons] become the uncritical and partisan defenders of the conventional and popular point of view. . . . Also, if we should look deeply enough, we would be surprised to discover the degree to which personal and private interest tends to influence and to determine men's opinions. . . . Yet if intelligence is to have the freedom of action necessary to accumulate new and valuable knowledge which may ultimately be applied to reforming our ways, it must loose itself from the bonds which now confine it."[7] And no force is so potent to break the bonds of tradition, of convention, of prejudice, of self-interest, of group-loyalty, of class-consciousness, as the influx of the Spirit.

"Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is," so that he becomes capable of such high and independent thinking? We perish for the lack of critical, creative thought. It is not easy, for example, to find men actually engaged in modern commerce, industry, and finance who will dispassionately face the question, "Is the present economic system beneficent and permanent, in the name of justice, economy, and the best and highest interests of mankind as a whole?" It is still true that even the majority of church people, as a rule, bring to their major business, professional and political occupations "a cultivated bias in favor of things as they are."

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[7] The reader is referred to James Harvey Robinson, *The Mind in the Making*, pp. 26-27, 58-59, 127-130.

Defective ideas abound concerning the nature of "a man in whom the Spirit of God is." To many the phrase suggests exuberant people, people whose emotions have gotten the better of their judgment; who have more zeal than knowledge, who are swayed by impulse rather than by reason. On the contrary, when a man is truly filled with the Spirit, he is given a power of vision beyond that of other men; he is able to see through and beyond the immediate temporalities which hide the truth from other men's eyes. A man in whom the Spirit of God is, all through history has been one

"... who can divine
Where real right doth lie
And dares to take the side that seems
Wrong to man's blindfold eye."

The Spirit, according to Jesus' definition of it, is the Spirit of truth, and the function of the Spirit is to guide men into all truth. The power of mental and moral penetration into the truth which lies beyond the accepted ideas of the world in which one lives comes to one only as he is filled with the Spirit.

The church leaders of our day possess the power to influence the life of their generation only as in this sense they have the mind of Christ. Unless one can see through the religious, economic, and social prejudices of the hour and announce a truth which lies beyond them, one may do respectable work within certain limits, but one is powerless to direct or to order the world in which one lives. Merely to echo the accepted maxims and axioms of both church and society, to make these the immovable basis of one's thinking and speaking—this may be to go through with the form, it is not to wield any power to impress, to alter the nature and quality of this world's life.

President Burton, of Chicago, once remarked to his students and friends that "probably no generation in human history has ever had to readjust its thinking to so many facts from so many quarters in so short a space of time as have the men and women who have been alive during the past half-century, and have tried to keep in touch with what mankind is finding out. Not simply the natural sciences, which have so vastly extended and rapidly altered our conception of the physical universe about us and of the history of life upon this planet, but hardly less the social sciences, with their new knowledge of human origins, history, literature, and interactions, have carried the intellectual life of mankind to a new level within our lifetime. On that new level the best thinking of our own generation must be done. The new physics, the new historical method, the new sociology, the new comparative religion, and now, not least, the new psychology, have poured upon us a mingled flood of facts, probabilities and possibilities that have swept us inexorably into one of the most rapid and confused periods of intellectual transition of our human experience. Just where, when, or how we shall come out, no thoughtful man can foresee."

In such an age to waste time and energy on unimportant and inconsequential questions, is to forget the real issue which the Church faces today: Is a philosophical or practical materialism to conquer the spiritual interests of mankind? At such an hour the cry goes up: "Can we find a man in whom the Spirit of God is," whose mind can penetrate beyond the immediate preoccupations of men, see the way which leads to truth, and guide the thinking and the living of this world to higher spiritual levels?

The open mind has been called the noblest, the rarest, the most difficult to achieve of all human ambitions. Yet it is only as we approximate the sincerity, the courage, the detachment of the mind of Jesus that we shall help the world forward into truer and better ways. Intellectual penetration is one of the permanent elements of personal influence and power. It is the rare possession of one in whom the Spirit of God is.

Once more, to be a person of influence and power one needs to possess in large degree the quality of moral passion. No one who is a stranger to this quality ever gets very far or accomplishes very much in the world in which he lives. So many people take the line of least resistance, so naturally seductive to man. "Here and there, however, one comes upon one who loves to 'live dangerously,' who can be depended upon to take the high line, the noble line, and actively oppose with all of his nature the base things of life." In a word, he has what may be called the moral fighting instinct. No one can live effectively without this quality. No true performer who has not, in greater or less degree, possessed it. In the Bible and out of it, every soul that has wielded power and influence has been filled with moral passion.

The disciples were men of immense moral purpose and passion when once they had been baptized by the Holy Ghost. There were scores and hundreds of these men and women driven by deep feeling. We see the glow of moral passion running through the whole story of the early Church.

The times call for this type of person. "Can we find such a one as this is, one in whom the Spirit of God is?" There are many well-intentioned people in the world to-day. They try to do right so far as they comprehend the meaning of the term. The real trouble with them is, not that they do wrong or right, but that they really do not do anything at all. Their moral machinery is perfect. It is also motionless. They are good, but too often they are good for nothing. Their lives have no real moral value.

For many people the unforgivable sin is an unpremeditated enthusiasm. This is a fatal defect of character. We see the blight of it on all sides. Of a distinguished American statesman, Charles Eliot Norton once remarked that he had never had an unselfish thought nor a disinterested ambition in his life. Too many otherwise cultured and intelligent people have the same disquieting trait of character. They lack that force of character, that disinterested passion which alone gives significance and moral meaning and power to any human soul.

What does such a character need? It needs a Day of Pentecost. It needs the gift of the Spirit. It needs deliverance from self. From this point of view it remains the critical question to ask of anyone whether or not he has ever known a Day of Pentecost in his life. There is so much of apprehension in the air. We all know it. So much of prudence and of caution. We have amiable people, good-natured people, well-meaning people in abundance, but what we need is people who have burning within them the quenchless fires of holy enthusiasm. It was said of Sidney Lanier that he had a "certain immortal and unconquerable fineness of fiber." And to another apostolic life the fine tribute was given: "There was that about him which defies analysis, which eludes definition, but which is found in those rare characters who gain our confidence, win our admiration, kindle an affection." What is this quality? Is there any other word by which we can describe it except to say that it is the suggestion of moral passion and of spiritual power?

Always there are these two warring tendencies in the soul: the one which says, "Soul, take thy ease, eat, drink, and be merry," and that other which bids us go forth, not to be content with the attained, to be pioneers, gallant crusaders. Always there are these two contending impulses, and under which banner we range ourselves, whether on the whole we lean to risk or to safety, will of necessity determine not only on our existence, but the meaning of that existence to the world in which we live.

There are various influences abroad in the world which, unless we are on our guard, will rob us of this priceless possession of moral passion. One of them is routine. We go on in the same old way, and before we know it, the fighting edge has gone from our spirits, and without our knowing it the glory of the Lord has departed from us. When a man invariably has money in the bank, and is respected and respectable, has graduated from college, has a decorous wife and children, has never been carried away by any passion or enthusiasm, knows the right people and conforms strictly to the customs of good society, and when this sort of thing has been going on for two or three generations, then there is apt to creep into the blood a coldness which would chill the heart of a bronze statue.

Again, culture and refinement can dull the edge of moral passion. Professor Peabody has reminded us that when metals are refined they are heated, but when men are, it seems that they must be cooled. The dilettante, critical mind is the easiest victim of a cultivated neutrality. Such people suffer from the malady of having no opinion, and this they call moderation; or of having an opinion but not expressing it, which they call balance of mind. The critically inclined are incapable of comprehending the irrepressible spirit. Cultivation often means an excessive repression of the emotional life as if such a repression were a virtue. But the highest scholarship never lacks this quality of spiritual initiative and moral passion. Real scholarship involves not only learning, but spontaneity, originality, attack, passion.

Nothing is finer in biography than to see the way in which some men and women have defied the corroding effect of time, the seductive influence of culture, the benumbing effects of experience, and have never lost the glory of their spiritual youth—were driven to the end by a profound inward compulsion. When Hopkinson Smith died, between the ages of seventy and eighty, a reviewer declared that "to the end he worked with the unspent ardor of youth." And existence is relatively meaningless which lacks the same flowing passion, the same consuming purpose.

Some years ago, William T. Stead died heroically in the Titanic disaster. He was not young in years, but he was in spirit. He said that a certain poem of Lowell's had changed his life. That poem was "The Extreme Unction." It will teach us to-day the same lesson that it taught him—the idea that anything wrong in this world is a divine call to use one's life in righting it. That idea sank deep in his soul:

"God bends from out the deep and says,
'I gave thee this great gift of life;
Wast thou not called in many ways?
Are not my heaven and earth at strife?
I gave thee of my seed to sow;
Bringst thou me my hundredfold?'
Can I look up with face aglow
And answer, 'Father, here is gold'?"

"Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?" Is it not of the essence of religion that the Spirit of God shall create in man such a profound and lasting moral passion? "Religion," Professor W. R. Matthews has written, "is tending to degenerate into a decent formula wherewith to embellish the comfortable life." Is not the difference between a religion that is real and one that is unreal the presence or absence of the Holy Spirit of God? It is possible to live in the simple appreciation of God-like ideas and ideals without rising to the appreciation of the great and glorious cause of religion and of Christianity. That is a new phase of the matter, a fresh and distinct conception. We need the great change from being quietly and receptively religious, to seeing the Cause, accepting it, being devoted to it. "The Call of the Cross is the high venture of living in a world not yet realized."

Thus the whole appeal is changed from something to be appreciated and enjoyed, from something that offers us, as it were, its benediction, to something not yet achieved or perfected urgently calling for help, that its benediction may be not ours only, but others' also. The supreme need is a vision of this matter of Christ's reign among men as a Cause not yet established, but always with an Ideal, and a banner and a field for conquest. When one is truly filled with the Spirit, that is what religion means to him. And only when religion means this to a man does he mean much to the world in which he lives.

Spiritual insight, intellectual penetration, moral passion—these always and everywhere are the salient characteristics of the morally significant life. Only of such can it be said that they have the power to order and to influence the world in which they live. And that power comes from the presence within the soul of the Spirit of God. Thus, to be filled with the Spirit becomes our greatest moral need.

VII

THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT

"And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth."—*1 John 5. 6.*

VII

THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT

THE words "Spirit" and "Witness" are often found together in the New Testament. When Jesus told his disciples not to depart from Jerusalem until they had been baptized with the Holy Ghost, it was that they should be his witnesses![1]

St. Paul taught that "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit."[2] The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews wrote that "the Holy Ghost also is a witness unto us." St. John said that "it is the Spirit that beareth witness."[3] And it was when he was in the Spirit that the inspired author of the Apocalypse bore his witness. The conclusion is inevitable that a result of being filled with the Spirit is that one becomes a witness of the Truth; that to be a true witness it is necessary that one should have received the Holy Spirit.

At least it is true that after their Day of Pentecost the early disciples became unanswerable witnesses of the Christian faith.[4] "They gave witness of the resurrection of the Lord."[5] They were "witnesses of these things"; they were

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[1] Acts 1. 5-8.

[2] Romans 8. 16.

[3] 1 John 5. 6.

[4] Acts 4. 13.

[5] Acts 4. 33.

"his witnesses unto the people."[6] And we read that the "Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city."[7] Inevitably as they became possessed of the Spirit, they bore witness of the Truth.

This witness was of different kinds. It was the spontaneous expression and utterance of the Truth. Filled with the Spirit, its expression could not be repressed. Rough hands were put over their mouths, but they spoke because they had to speak the Truth that filled their whole being. The Spirit cannot be quenched. They witnessed by what they suffered. The Greek word for "witness" is "martyr"—and the early disciples were martyrs. From the first there had been persecution. Two of the disciples fell early by the sword of Herod. Peter was imprisoned. The early Church at Jerusalem owed its first Dispersion to the persecution of those who called themselves Christians. The missionary travels of St. Paul are annotated with the story of his sufferings. But they were all good and faithful witnesses. Filled with the Spirit they were not only willing, but glad to suffer for righteousness' sake.

Their chief witness, however, was themselves. They witnessed by the quality of their lives. They became a new sort of creature. They compelled attention by what they were. The Spirit recreated them into a type of human being with which the world was not familiar. They became themselves an unanswerable argument for the faith which they professed. "The Spirit beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth." The one undeniable truth is a type of soul that vindicates itself. The Spirit created a type of soul that bore unanswerable witness, because men knew it to be the Truth.

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[6] Acts 13. 31.
[7] Acts 20. 23.

The greatest need in the religious life of the modern world is that Christian men and women shall be witnesses of the faith which they confess. Nothing less than this will ever convert the world, and nothing more than this is needed to convert it. If members of churches everywhere could be filled with the Spirit and become living witnesses of the Truth, the world would become Christian within a generation. This witness of the Spirit to-day will be what it was in New Testament days. Christians, filled with the Spirit, will speak because they cannot help speaking to others of the joy, the peace, the confidence with which their faith has enriched their lives. Such testimony will fall on sympathetic ears and on responsive hearts. All over the land are multitudes who hunger after a faith which they lack. Let one without argument bear witness to the Truth which has made him free, and he will be answering the inarticulate longings of many a soul. Again, Christians will bear witness by being martyrs, by suffering willingly for righteousness' sake. The spectacle is a moving one wherever it is seen, and it never fails to make its deep impression. Let anyone to-day choose less of income, of popularity, of pleasure because of loyalty to Christian principles and ideals, and he distinguishes himself at once from the rank and file. Let him do this with simplicity, without self-consciousness or ostentation, and he wields an immense influence and creates a lasting impression. The cause of Christ suffers enormously because so often His disciples are not willing to be His witnesses—even to losing a temporary advantage, a momentary pleasure.

Above all, however, Christians who are filled with the Spirit will bear witness by the undeniable quality of their lives. The sad, disappointing thing about contemporary Christianity is the fact that each individual Christian is not himself an unanswerable argument for the faith which he holds, which doubtless he believes. It gives him comfort and courage, but it does not make him a witness that all who see him and know him must acknowledge, and because they are compelled to admit the beauty and truth of his life, are compelled also to acknowledge the Truth that made him what he is. The greatest religious need of our time is that each separate Christian because he has been filled with the Spirit shall bear witness, because the Spirit is Truth.

Some time ago the distinguished Canon Woodward, of Westminster Abbey, was asked to address a young people's conference in London. The subject of the conference was: "Why is it that the young people of the present day are so aloof from the Church?" A commonplace topic enough. Nothing very original was mentioned until toward the end somebody said, "I believe the real fact of the matter is that we young people do not feel that there is anything like the reality and the earnestness in the Church and in Christian people which we should naturally expect to find in them."

It was not a question of the church services not being hearty enough, or anything of that kind; nor was it suggested that church people are hypocrites or backsliders. It was, rather, that there was nothing sufficiently distinctive about Christians as such; there was nothing to distinguish a Christian or a churchman from one who was neither. The Christian attitude did not mark itself off from the non-Christian attitude toward anything. There did not seem to be any distinctive Christian ideal in life: there was no great passion, no adventure, no attitude toward anything in particular, no moral earnestness or spiritual enthusiasm which marked a Christian, and stamped him as such; there was no moral distinction between Christian and non-Christian.

A few years ago a well-known writer contributed an article of an autobiographical character to the Atlantic Monthly.[8] He gave an informing account of his religious upbringing and of his present attitude toward religion and toward the Church. He said that he had many friends. Some of these went to church regularly, and some of them never went at all. Some were professedly Christian men, and some were not. Yet he could not possibly distinguish in any way between them as to character and performance. The only difference was that some had fallen into the habit of going to church and called themselves Christians, and the others had fallen out of that habit, and did not call themselves Christians. Belonging to the Church was like belonging to a club. You happened to, or happened not to be, members. That was all. You could not tell by watching them in their homes, friendships, business, or any other relation of life, whether they were Christian men or not. There was nothing distinctive or distinguishing about them.

Again, later, writing in Harper's Magazine, James Harvey Robinson, author of *The Mind in the Making,* wrote: "When we come to daily observations, we cannot distinguish between the believer or the unbeliever by his conduct, by his honesty, generosity, and other homely virtues. Bradstreet does not reckon with religion in establishing one's credit. The customs-house official would not pass unexamined the luggage of one professing the Athanasian Creed, or submitting a certificate of good standing in the Brick Church."[9] Now a customs official would not be doing his duty if he failed to examine a man's luggage because he recited to him the Apostles' Creed, or produced the certificate of his membership in a church, but it surely ought to make some difference in what he finds there when he does.

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[8] *The Natural History of a Soul,* by Earnest Elmo Calkins, *Atlantic Monthly,* November, 1925.

All around us there is the witness for which men are looking. They are not looking to see if men and women who call themselves Christians are Christians because of the orthodoxy of their belief, or because of their raptures or ecstasies, but the witness for which they are looking is quality of life and conduct. "What is the practical effect of Christian motives, they ask themselves, on those who profess Christianity? Do their lives testify to the practicability of their faith? Is the Christian religion actually molding the habits of Christian believers; or are the ideals of Christianity revered more than they are realized? The most threatening enemy of religion is not infidelity, but inconsistency. 'To a large extent,' said John Bright in 1880, 'the working people of this country do not care any more for the doctrine of Christianity than the upper classes care for the practice of their religion.' Might not a similar indictment be made to-day? What shall one say of a condition of society when the creeds of the Church are often devoutly repeated without perceptible effect on the practical conduct of domestic or social affairs? If the current moral standards of Christian believers are no better than those which prevail among people who make no pretense of being Christian believers at all, how can the Christian teaching be regarded as having a unique significance? If self-sacrifice, generosity, integrity are to be found in abundance quite apart from religious profession, why may not that profession be regarded as superfluous in modern life. It is a conviction to which many serious-minded people have arrived. They have arrived at the conviction that religion is a private solace; that the surface of life may be smoothed by Christian ordinances or consolations, while the depths remain unperturbed."[10] Religion, as every one knows, does not penetrate to the core of a man's conduct. It does not control his will.

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[9] *Religion Faces a New World,* Harper's Magazine, September, 1928.

Here are the judgments of others. What will our judgment be? We are, let us assume, Christians by profession, church-goers by choice and conviction. We know many people who share our faith and our loyalty to Christ and to the Church. We also know many people who do not.

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[10] Francis Greenwood Peabody: *The Christian Life in the Modern World*, pp. 15-19.

Now, is there any difference between these two sets of people on which we can lay our finger? Or, will we say, must we say, we do not see, or it is very difficult to see, any real distinctiveness in character, or any distinguishing attitude toward most of the problems of everyday life which those have adopted who say they are Christians? Sometimes one thinks that except for the fact that one goes to church on Sunday and another does not, there is little difference between a man who is a professing Christian and his next-door neighbor who is quite a respectable member of society, but professes no particular religious views. If we met these two men in their club or place of business, we would not be able to point to any clear distinction between the two. And if this is true, or if it comes anywhere near being true, can we blame a person, young or old, who says: "I cannot see that it makes any particular difference whether I become a Christian or not; whether I belong to a church or not. It does not seem to make any difference in the eyes of other people, so why should it make any difference in mine?"

Suppose that it did make a difference; suppose that it did make a difference so palpable, so visible, so self-evident, so undeniable, that all men could see it, and were compelled to recognize it. Suppose the moment anyone took the name of Christ, allied himself with the followers of Christ, that moment he began to differentiate himself in some subtle but sure fashion from people who lack the same inspiration. The strength and power possible to the Church are revealed at once by asking such a question. Then people would be compelled to say: "There is a reality here which cannot be gainsaid; there is a strength and a beauty here which cannot be denied." Perhaps this to-day is the one thing needful above all others. If Christians lived to-day as they ought to live, they could make Christianity so visible a fact as to force it on the attention and recognition of everyone. They could live on a mountain height for all to see as their Master pictured them—instead of mingling contentedly, and to all appearance indistinguishably, with the rest of men.

That Jesus expected His disciples to have a certain moral and spiritual distinction which would compel men to recognize them as His disciples is evident from the most casual reading of the Gospels. They are to be the salt of the earth; they are to be a bit of leaven in the lump—like yeast causing things to ferment and bubble a bit; they are to be like light shining so brightly before men that these would know that it is from God; they are to be like a city on a hill-top that cannot be hid, and not like a clump of houses lost indistinguishably in the level. That was the Master's great expectancy. That was to be the way the world's attention was to be caught. His disciples were to be marked men.

In the early Church, as we have seen, that is just what happened. That is why Christianity in the early days had tremendous vitality, virility, power of growth and development. What struck the world at the beginning of Christianity was not so much the new Christian doctrines it brought into the world, although that, of course, counted a good deal, but with the ordinary mass of people it was much more that Christians were different, separate from other people. They were a surprise. They were a daily sensation. They compelled people to say, "We never saw it in this fashion." They were a surprise in the way they lived. They kept themselves unspotted from the world. They lived lives of simple, austere morality in a world of self-indulgence. They drew no class distinction. A rich man would call a poor man his brother. A Jew would embrace a Gentile. A man of culture would mingle freely with the uneducated, and even with slaves. They lived lives distinguished by a great joy, a pervading happiness, above all, a great enthusiasm. They compelled people to stop and look and listen. They were not afraid of anything. What other people dreaded seemed to have no effect on them at all. They were not even afraid of death. It was not hard in those days to tell a Christian when you saw him. It was not hard to draw the line between those who went to a Christian assembly and those who did not. Filled with the Spirit, they bore witness, because the

Spirit is Truth. People had to take knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. Every Christian in his life, his character, was a living advertisement of the faith which he professed. It was this, rather than anything else, that gave such extraordinary vitality and propagating power to the Church and to Christianity in its early days.

It is this, and this alone, that will give vitality to the Church and to the Christian faith today. It is not for more or better preaching that we wait. Neither is it for a better philosophy of Christianity, or even a revision of its creeds and doctrines. What we want is an outpouring of the Spirit which will produce something so different and distinctive about Christian men and women that these will arrest the world's attention in our day, as the early Christians arrested the world's attention in their day. In some way or other people must be made to see something quite extraordinary—out of the ordinary—in the common walk of life. There must be the consummate sensation of a transformed and transfigured life. Things must be done in the Church which are done nowhere else. Men must be made to ask the question, "How did it happen?" That is the kind of sensation that startles and wins. Every Christian ought to make a sensation. He ought to be one. Prove, in a word, that Christianity can produce a higher type of character and people will admit that it is true. People will argue to the end of time and get nowhere. The only unanswerable argument is a God-like human life. People may answer abstract arguments, but they cannot deny a living argument, because the Spirit is Truth. Given one man like William Booth, who said that the first thing he would do when he got to heaven would be to ask for leave of absence that he might come back to earth and win a few more souls; given one woman like the mother of Phillips Brooks, the transparent beauty and spirituality of whose life were such that no man could deny the reality of the faith that produced them—and you have the answer to a thousand arguments.

Some years ago the London Spectator contained an account of a conversation between some well-known literary men on the subject of Christianity. Nearly everyone had something to say on the subject, and nearly everything that was said was negative and critical, if it was not positively hostile. Finally one member of the group was asked to speak who thus far had taken no part in the discussion. He said that he would agree with all that had been said by the others were it not for the fact that he had once known a man who was a Christian. That man had borne his witness and remained an insurmountable obstacle when it came to denying the truth of the Christian inspiration.

Suppose that every Christian man and woman presented the same difficulty? The manufacturers of a certain brand of confectionery put on each box the simple words: "It's different." Suppose every product of the Christian faith wore the same sign, "He is different." Possibly that is all that is needed, if the difference were profound enough and palpable enough.

How, now, will this witness of the Spirit be made manifest, so that there will be a distinction about Christian living that will demand recognition and reverence? In the first place, with Christian people to-day, as in the early days, there will be the possession of the homely virtues of honesty, courage, generosity, and charitableness, such as is not found in the ordinary run of mankind. When Jesus said: "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees,"[11] he certainly included it. No amount of orthodoxy or piety of certain sorts counts for anything so long as these primary virtues are not firmly embedded in the daily conduct of Christian men. Christian people may well begin there. As A. Maude Royden has trenchantly written: "At every step in [His] great argument Christ began with a pagan virtue and goes on from that to Christianity. Is not some of the disgust that our religious professions, and even our religious life, have awakened among non-Christians due to the fact that we seek to practice these amazing virtues, these soaring Christian graces of holiness and sanctity, without having acquired the rudimentary virtues of honesty, courage, loyalty, and self-respect?"[12] A form of revival most sorely needed in contemporary Christianity is just at this point. Nothing perhaps would impress the world more than the discovery that precisely as men and women call themselves Christian they can be counted upon to act with an integrity, a bravery, a generosity, not always to be found outside the Christian community.

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[11] St. Matthew 5. 20.

With this said, however, it must be admitted that it is not so easy to make apparent the distinction between Christian and non-Christian as it was in the early days. The reason for this is that the whole standard of morals has been changed, profoundly changed, by Christianity itself. The world has, by degrees, very largely accepted in a broad sense, at any rate, Christian principles of personal and social morality. It is not for nothing that Christianity has been operating for two thousand years. And as a result of this, the level of morality has been raised appreciably so that evils which two thousand years ago were commonplace, no decent man, whether he calls himself a Christian or not, will think of indulging in to-day. A Christian in those days who renounced these immoralities was conspicuous. But a Christian who renounces the same immoralities to-day is not conspicuous at all. So do all his decent neighbors just as truly as he, although they may make no profession of religion and never darken a church door. Or, again, philanthropy in the broad sense of the term is a by-product of Christianity. Hospitals, schools, welfare organizations, care of the sick and unfortunate—these have all followed in the wake of Christianity. They have all become a part of the moral life of a community which has known the teaching and preaching of the Christian faith. Consequently, they have become a part of the general program of the average man who accepts the moral standards of the community in which he lives. In the early days if one went gratuitously to visit the fatherless or widows in their affliction, to care for the poor unfortunate who had no personal claim on him at all, he became conspicuous. But to-day he does not become conspicuous at all, and a Christian or a churchgoer who goes in for community welfare work does not distinguish himself in the least from his neighbour who is no Christian or churchgoer, for he does so also. The really conspicuous person is the one who occupies the unenviable position of turning a deaf ear to all appeals of the sort, and he is condemned alike by the Christian churchgoer and by the good citizen who is neither.

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[12] *Pagan Virtues and Christian Graces*, by A. Maude Royden, Atlantic Monthly, June, 1926.

Consequently, it is not enough for those who call themselves Christians, if they are to show something which those do not show who are strangers to the Christian inspiration, only to visit the fatherless or widows in their affliction, and to keep themselves unspotted from the world; in a word, to be decent and to be generous. For do not the non-Christians and the non-churchgoers the same? If there is to be a difference, it must be on higher levels than this. And, of course, the higher you go, the more difficult the performance becomes. But Christian living and the Christian witness were never intended to be easy. Perhaps the justest indictment which can be brought against us is that we have made too easy a thing of it. If it is easy for us to be Christian, the chances are that we have a low estimate and idea of what it means to be a Christian. And certainly, in our day at least, it must mean more than merely being decent and charitable. If it does not mean any more than that, nobody is going to see much difference between a Christian and a non-Christian. Because, for a good many of us, it has not meant much more than that, the distinction, the subtle difference between one who shares the Christian inspiration and the one who does not, has not been made visible. People, many people, do not see that it makes much difference whether they become Christian or not. They must be made to see that it does.

Now, what is the higher level which Christian people must occupy to-day, if others are to take knowledge of them that they have been with Jesus, if they are in any wise to be a surprise, to attract attention, force others to say that there is a reality in their lives which those lack who do not know and possess their secret, their faith, their inspiration?

In the first place, let us name what, for want of a better word, we must call spirituality. We realize perfectly well how difficult it is to define that quality. And yet it is one of the most palpable, one of the most recognizable things in the world. Everyone, when he sees it, knows it. And when he knows it he reverences it. He recognizes and he admits that it is one of the most undeniable and beautiful qualities of character. Every one of us has known some such. person. And when we have known him, we have admitted that here is something which is the product neither of secular education nor of secular culture, but comes from a deeper source than either. Here is a certain character and disposition of which you cannot tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth. There seems to be a certain divine atmosphere about it, an afflatus which is from above. Where did he get it? From society? From those around him? By the inoculation of crowds and masses? They all answer, it is not in us. It is not a reflection of the world without; rather it rises up from some fount that is within. It has God's breath upon it. You are never prepared for what it will do next. It seems to move from some far off center and, in spite of its transparency and sweetness, it fills you with awe.

Now we have all known such people. They are different. To come across these people, someone has said, is like coming across a Bible quotation in the midst of a newspaper paragraph. And we all feel and know what that means. They have what you call spiritual quality, and that is just what the average person lacks. He may have a hundred virtues—be good, honest, respectable, earnest, what not—but he lacks spiritual quality. Yet spiritual quality everybody admits is the finest thing of all. A man paid tribute to it just the other day. He was confronted with it, and he said, "I simply never saw anything like it before." Spiritual quality—what is it? Well, it is not piety or religiousness in the ordinary sense of these terms. "It is the grasp of a Life, the knowledge of which is revealed to some babes and denied to many who are learned. Able men lack it and cease to inspire leadership; simple, unnoticed men and women possessing it are literally the salt of the earth." People who have it are distinguished people, in the sense that their distinction is fully admitted and allowed. Here is the portrait of one: "The contagious quality of his spirit was associated in the minds of many with the highest truths and the most beautiful qualities of the Christian spirit. In his silences, in his speech, the man he was, spoke with the authority of a great purity and with the eloquence of a lofty, sensitive and fine human spirit." Such a life is an undeniable witness to spiritual reality.

Here, then, lies one of our great opportunities. The world to-day is strong on morals of a certain sort and on secular culture and on philanthropies and benefactions. It is admittedly weak in its experience of spiritual reality, and in the possession of a type of character which results from such an experience. But such an experience and a character which is the result of it is within the grasp of every follower of Jesus Christ. No one can be baptized with the Holy Spirit without receiving a secret gift which will gradually refine his inmost existence and clothe him with the garment of a noble and lofty spirit. This is the unique Christian gift, and wherever it is received, the one who receives it becomes an eloquent advocate of the Christian truth. For it is "the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth."

Again, in the moral life of the Christian there must be found qualities which are lacking in those who are without the Christian inspiration. One of the disappointing things in contemporary morality is its contentment with existing standards. A man feels that he is all right if he conforms to current standards in conduct, in business, or in social relations. If he does not sink beneath what society or contemporary ethics says is right and proper, he is satisfied. But right here is where the Christian should diverge from the non-Christian. At this point these should part company. The true Christian is never satisfied with existing standards. He does not reckon that he has done his moral duty if he obeys the rules and regulations of society or of his trade and profession. Rather he is constantly endeavouring to raise these standards, and to push higher the level of what is regarded as right and proper in every relation in life. A Christian is bound to be a non-conformist. The early Christians were, and they turned the world upside down. Their ideas were revolutionary. They did not let things alone. Precisely so to-day it is impossible that the Spirit of God should possess a human soul without causing that soul to be a bit of disturbance in the world in which it lives. It is what Jesus called it, a bit of yeast. Here lies a possible moral distinction between the Christian and the non-Christian. The non-Christian wants things let alone. The Christian never lets anything alone. He is a disturber of the peace. Now, people do not like to have their peace disturbed. They like repose. And when their lives repose on conventional economic or industrial or political ideas, they do not care to have anyone upset those ideas. But a Christian is bound to do just that. The fact that all through the ages they have done that has vindicated their right to be called Christian. Those who protested that the early Christians turned the world upside down spoke the truth. The side that was down needed to be turned up; and the side that was up needed to be turned down. And the early Christians set about doing it. The real gospel does not let things alone. It is constantly busy working for a juster, humaner, truer social order, and here the Christian has his chance. And here is where he has lost it. Too often he is complacent, satisfied with things as they are. Too often he is irritated and impatient at anyone who questions if the present *status quo* is sacrosanct. He does not differentiate himself here at any point from the man who fails to accept the ideas of Jesus, and to admit the supreme authority of His gospel. But if he did? Well, men might like him for it, or dislike him; men might agree with him or disagree; men might say that he was wise, or that he was foolish or dangerous, but they would be obliged to take knowledge of him that his ideas sprang from no purely secular source, but were the product of an inward, working Holy Spirit. This does not mean that the Christian is in any sense the enemy of the society in which he lives. He is, rather, its salt, its seasoning element, without which it would soon become stale and ultimately rotten.

This is the high moral task and mission and distinguishing moral quality of the one who possesses the Spirit of Christ.

If on some such heights as this, if on the high level of a real, pervading, dominating spirituality, a restless, pervading, creative moral passion and purpose, everyday Christians could live and move and have their being, the world could not ignore them, or be unaware of them, or fail to be impressed by them. Rather, it would be today, as it was in the early Church after its Day of Pentecost, Christ's disciples would be His witnesses. The Spirit bearing witness, "because the Spirit is truth."

VIII

THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT

"Be filled with the Spirit."—*Ephesians 5. 18.*

VIII

THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT

PENTECOST, a term adapted from the Greek, means, as we all know, fiftieth. It was applied, both by the Rabbis and by Greek-speaking Jews, to the second of the chief Hebrew festivals, because it fell on the fiftieth day after the feast of unleavened bread. In the Old Testament[1] it is called the Feast of the Harvest. Because the life of the Hebrew people was fundamentally agricultural it was natural for them to have a festival at which time they would express gratitude to God for the return of the harvest. Thus, the feast fell in the late spring or early summer. It was a joyful acknowledgment of the fruits of the earth.[2] In the Christian Church its importance was continued. The Jewish festival was signalized and transformed by the coming of the Holy Spirit, on that feast day of the Jews, with power, in accordance with the promise of Christ. The gift of the Spirit was the first fruits of the spiritual harvest.[3] The "Eucharistic" character of the Jewish Pentecost made it harmonize with the joy of the disciples over their spiritual possessions and blessings. From the first it seems to have become a standing Christian festival since Paul "hasted, if it were possible for him to be at Jerusalem the Day of Pentecost."[4] There is no evidence that the Gentile Church observed the feast, but by the end of the second century it became an established Christian festival for the whole Church. After Easter, it is the oldest of the Christian feast days.

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[1] Exodus 23. 16. Deuteronomy 16. 10. 2 Chronicles 8. 13.
[2] Romans 8. 23; 11. 16.
[3] Galatians 5. 22.

We read that when they had received the Holy Ghost the early disciples became so exuberant in their manifestations of joy that onlookers thought they were intoxicated.[5] Evidently, words to this effect had reached the ears of Peter, since in the beginning of his sermon he reminded his hearers that men do not usually get drunk at nine o'clock in the morning. They were intoxicated, but by the Spirit, and not by wine. Evidently, also, this kind of spiritual intoxication was not frowned upon by the New Testament preachers, for St. Paul tells his Ephesian friends that they shall indeed become drunk—but not because they are filled with wine, the usual fashion, but by the Spirit, the Christian fashion.

It must be admitted, however, that this portion of the New Testament teaching is not approved or commended by the common sentiment of men to-day. They are inclined to look askance at one who shows any considerable degree of feeling in religion, or are even inclined to question, on that account, the sincerity of his piety. Enthusiasm in religion nowadays is at a discount. Emotion is in the discard. To-day we are all for self-control. A gentleman is a person who never gets excited. A man is called foolish who shows his real feelings or lets himself go. The romanticist and the poet have been suppressed in the interest of pure science. Of course there are exceptions to this rule. It is still perfectly good form to act like a madman about athletic contests, or at a political meeting, or on the stock exchange. No one seems to object to that. But if a man should act in a religious meeting as he does at a political meeting, he would be looked upon as a fanatic or even as a dangerous lunatic.

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[4] Acts 20. 16.

[5] Acts 2. 13.

There are reasons for this. Men have learned that religious enthusiasm often has nothing to do with ethical conduct. They have known people who have been fervent in prayer but short on performance. This separation between religious feeling and practical conduct is as old as religion itself. Amos thundered against it in his day, and Phillips Brooks denounced it as "religious impressionism" in his day. The story has been such a long one, and such a sad one, that it is no wonder people think the more feeling a man's religion has, the less sincerity it will have also.

But there is another reason for this distrust of feeling in religion. It comes from the careful habits of mental processes in which the modern man has been trained. The way in which, therefore, many so-called religious people, under stress of religious feeling, rush at conclusions in neglect or even defiance of the laws of reason seems positive indecency to people who have been trained to think in orderly fashion. Clifford, the English scientist and thinker, has stated this point very clearly: "Belief is desecrated when given to unproved and unquestioned statements for the solace and private pleasure of the believer. If belief is accepted on insufficient evidence, the pleasure is a stolen one. It is sinful because it is stolen in defiance of our duty to mankind. That duty is to guard ourselves from such beliefs as from a pestilence which may shortly master our own body and then spread to the rest of the town. It is wrong always, everywhere, and for everyone to believe anything upon insufficient evidence."

These are good, sound, healthful words. Criticism and caution are needed by all, but, above all, without doubt, by those who are of the household of faith. "When one turns to the magnificent edifice of the physical sciences, and sees how it was reared; what thousands of disinterested moral lives of men lie buried in its mere foundations! What patience and postponements, what choking down of preference, what submission to the icy laws of outer fact, are wrought into its very stones and mortar! How absolutely impersonal it stands in its vast augustness!

Then how contemptible seems every little sentimentalist who comes blowing his voluntary smoke dreams, pretending to decide things from out of his private dream! Can we wonder if those bred in the rugged and manly school of science should feel like spewing such subjectivism out of their mouths? The whole system of loyalties which grow up in the schools of science go dead against its toleration."

Perhaps the best way to discover the real place of feeling in religion is to discover its real place in life. For religion is not different from life. Rather it is life carried to its ultimate conclusions and raised to its highest terms. If, therefore, we find that feeling has a real place in life, we shall surely see that it has a real place in religion.

Suppose we were to ask ourselves what kind of a life ours would be if we were to take out of it everything that is the product of what sometimes is called "mere sentiment." Suppose we should repent of, and be sorry for, and should seek to undo everything that was the result of emotion pure and simple. All the impulsive acts, the suggestions of the moment, words and deeds that were prompted by sudden inspiration—let us take them all out and put them all away. Now do we like ourselves the better for it? Are we prouder of ourselves? Do we think that we are better men or women without these than we are with them? Is our life truer with them or without them? And if truer, better, what then? Then must there not be a certain place, a certain legitimacy, a certain authority, which belongs to the emotions, without which our life is not really what it ought to be?

Some time ago a thief was being chased by the officers of the law. He was being hard pressed by them when he came suddenly upon a lemonade booth in charge of a little girl. He had a moment to spare, so he halted and, taking one of the largest glasses, emptied it at a swallow. He turned in haste, and was about to rush from the spot, when he paused. What stopped him? It was the sight of two appealing eyes, a little outstretched hand. The man hesitated, stopped, took out the money and placed it in the hand of the little girl. That act cost him his chance of freedom. The next moment the officers had overtaken him—he was handcuffed and led away. What will we say? Was that a rational act or not? A few bitter tears, a short gulp of grief and disappointment—what were these compared to freedom and liberty? Yet, feeling had dominated reason and had shown the nobler way. What we call sentiment, which is by no means to be confounded with sentimentalism or sentimentality, is admitted and recognized to be one of humanity's noblest instincts.

Literature is full of similar incidents. The life of Jean Valjean in Victor Hugo's masterpiece, undoubtedly the most powerful romance in all literature, is full of illustrations of action which is controlled and dominated, not by logic or reason, but by deep emotion. Just because of this his character is what it is. Filled with the Spirit, he mounts unto the heights of moral achievement and victory.

Emotion, moreover, is admitted to be a controlling factor in human life and in what we call practical affairs. In family life, for example, feeling plays a great part, and must be accounted one of the foremost elements of happiness. The matter-of-fact man or woman sees the group of people bound together by the family tie, as a certain number of persons who are related to each other and live with each other. But a member of that group knows that when that has been said the half has not been told. And it is precisely feeling which supplies the rest.

In political forecasts allowance always has to be made for the possible consequence of a current of strong and irresistible feeling. We cannot shut our eyes to the fact that when great bodies of men get together it is the unexpected that often happens. The calculation of the wisest is then but a cipher before the sweep of a great emotion. The same truth holds over in the world of business and of finance. Upon what is called "sentiment," with a slight touch of derision by people who call themselves practical, business prosperity and adversity may be said to depend. Some of the greatest financial reactions have been set in motion, not by a change of condition, but by a change of feeling. That subtle thing called "confidence" is shaken and a panic ensues. In the cool and shrewd calculation of speculators allowance has to be made for the presence of this feeling, for the possibility that a whole carefully constructed plan or system shall be upset and swept aside by a wave of emotion, a sweep or tide of feeling which comes from an invisible source, but has very visible results.

In the region of our beliefs we discover that no one who believes anything worth believing believes it solely on the basis of his intellectual eyesight, or even insight, wholly apart from the deeper, passional, and emotional elements in his nature. To assert that, according to William James, is to fly right into the teeth of fact. One never really believes anything until he has come to perceive its significance not only with the eyes of the intellect, but with the truer vision of the heart. Let the soul once become awakened to the spiritual necessity of any ideal, and the mind will fashion that ideal according to its own powers and within its own limitations. But let the soul fail to perceive its significance, and the mind obediently declares its non-existence. The deepest foundations of any man's beliefs must be laid in his own moral and spiritual experience. That was the profound contribution of Fichte to the history of modern thought. It is not primarily by a mental, but by a moral process that one arrives finally at any one of the ultimates of faith. The proof of anything lies in the moral life. That is where the proof of God ultimately rests. The real affirmation of God lies with the serious acknowledgment of a moral ideal. Without such an ideal he has no use for a God, and all the demonstrations of all the philosophers will have no meaning. But let him begin the pursuit of a moral ideal, and so perceive the meaning of God, and all the arguments against the existence of God will have no meaning for him also. Thus our deepest feelings are bound to create our beliefs. It is so with the freedom of the will. The moral life is nonsense if we are automata. Thus people will let the determinists argue against it, yet assert this freedom.. They feel that they are free, and thus they know that they are free moral agents. Feeling is the final arbiter. The utterance from within—this furnishes me with my beliefs. People who are filled with the Spirit are people who are filled with conviction also. This is what Emerson once called that deep force, that last fact behind which we cannot go, but in which all things find their origin. This utterance from within gives us the raw material of our belief whether in the moral code of the universe, the unity of the world, the authority of conscience, the recognition of duty, or what you will. The inner man speaks and that is the beginning and the end of it. And this is not mere subjectivism, or mere sentimentalism, or believing things whether they are true or not, because it is the private solace or to the private advantage of the believer to do so; this is literally the discovery of what has been called the fountain of truth, which cannot be denied without making fools of our best selves, without deluding our very selves.

If, therefore, feelings have this central place in life, they must have a central place in religion. No good, only harm, can result from not conceding to it the place which belongs to it. It supplies the intimate sanction of one's beliefs, the freedom, the joy, the sense of power and elation; it supplies the glow and the radiance of the truly religious life, so that a man's religious life is seriously impoverished, and often dies down and becomes cold and formal, uncertain and ineffective without it.

Thus the manifestation of the Spirit in the intoxicated souls of the early Pentecostal Christians is one which all men who seek truly and deeply to live the religious life should seek to experience.

"My own view of religion," wrote Samuel Gridley Howe, one of the noblest of the last generation of New England men and women, a man who splendidly wrought not only for his generation, but for all coming generations, "my own view of religion is that it should be an affair of the heart rather than the head, of the feelings rather than the intellect. I hold him to be the true Christian who religiously feels and acts, rather than he who religiously believes and thinks."

The antithesis between heart and head, between feeling and thinking, is unnecessary, and may be unfortunate. At least the saying is significant, in pointing out the fundamental place which emotion at its purest and best should occupy in all normal and victorious Christian living.

If we could but learn to trust our inmost inspirations, intuitions, feelings, how much nobler our faith and our character would become! Many a man would have a surer faith in God than he has to-day if he would learn to cultivate and to trust these deep and passionate feelings of his soul which cry out for the living God and pant for Him as the hart panteth for the water-brooks. Everybody knows what such moments are. The veriest doubter that ever lived has his hours when he doubts his doubt more stoutly than he ever doubted his God. In defiance of what anything or anyone else may say there is this inalienable affirmation, this everlasting Yea, which tells us that God is, and that He is the Rewarder of them that seek Him. God is calling to us in a myriad voices, and the heart is responding to His call. Deep calls unto deep—and when these unbidden calls come to us, to rise up and to answer "Here am I" brings us at once into the presence of the Eternal.

To trust our inspirations, to trust our aspirations, to believe that the truth which rises from the hidden depth of our souls is truer than the reports which reach us in any other way, and from any other source—this is one of the surest avenues to religious certitude.

If that is true of our beliefs, it is true of our characters. Except our lives be touched with emotion, except they be quickened by a live coal from the altar of God, they do become so prosaic and disappointing. It was the watchword of the author of *Ecce Homo:* "No heart is pure that is not passionate, and no virtue is safe that is not enthusiastic." It is only the fire of a real passion that keeps the heart pure—it is only the zeal of a real enthusiasm that causes our virtues to become not fixed and stale, but beautiful and alive and putting forth the blossoms of a constantly expanding Spirit. "Nothing great was ever done without enthusiasm." And it is only the absence of a real enthusiasm which prevents many a life from being truly great.

"Feeling at its truest and best does not rob a man of his common sense nor destroy his reasoning power. It is not a delusion or a folly or an extravagance. It is consistent with the coolest exercise of judgment. It is being in earnest in what we believe and do; and any earnestness, says the wise man, makes life endurable." Few characters become malleable except under the heat of feeling. It is feeling alone that on the crest of its momentum can overthrow the tyranny of evil habit and command the loyalty of the whole man. We need more people in this world who are intoxicated. We need more literally God-intoxicated men and women. So many people have every equipment, every endowment, every possibility. What they need is a Day of Pentecost, when they shall become filled with the Spirit.

There are two plain tests by which anyone can assure himself of the sincerity and dignity of his religious feelings. Phillips Brooks put it into a word when he said that we can test any man's religious feeling by asking first what is its parentage, and, second, what is its offspring. What is its parentage? Whence did it spring? Did it come from a conscious effort to create, or to manufacture it? Or to work it up? Then we can distrust it. No religious feeling has any moral worth which is an end in itself. If by any artificial process one has consciously tried to produce it, it is sure to be false and superficial and unworthy. One of the most dismal experiences in life is to go gunning for some kind of a religious feeling which one thinks one ought to possess, which one envies in someone else, which one thinks it would be a joy to possess for oneself. One may lament one's lack of it. One may wish that one possessed it. One may reasonably expect one day to have it. But one is entitled only to that degree and amount of religious feeling which comes to him as a result of the daily doing of one's duty to Jesus Christ. Such a soul is sure one day of a Pentecostal blessing from above. But any other kind of feeling is meretricious, artificial, insincere, and is sure sooner or later to issue in spiritual disillusion.

In the next place, what is its offspring? What does the feeling do? That there is danger in emotionalism all teachers of religion have frankly recognized. It may be an enervating and thus a positively dangerous element in religious experience. As Dr. H. F. Cope puts it in his admirable volume on *Religious Education in the Church,* "If emotional experiences are to have value, the stimulus must stimulate to something; it must be a beginning and not a terminus." No feeling can be trusted which cannot be put to work.

In a vivid phrase, the apostle Paul, who was himself a striking illustration of a character that is filled with the Spirit, reminds us that "the love of Christ constraineth us."[6] The word "constrain" literally means to compress, to delimit, to confine within definite bounds. Hence, by this phrase St. Paul enforces the needed lesson that the sentiment of Christian love will not be a broad, diffuse, purposeless emotion, but that it will confine our lives within certain limits. Our emotions, instead of being a broad and sluggish stream of mere sentimentality, will be constrained in their definite banks, and will flow directly to useful ends of service. Christ's constraining love will not permit us to pause at mere abstract and generalized statements of intention, but will impel us to concrete and individualized acts of devotion. We need to think more about the constraining love of Christ. We are often told how the love of Christ broadens our lives; it is well to remember also that it contracts them. We are often told how the love of Christ widens our affections; we are reminded that it also focuses them. The highest expression of the love of Christ is to be found not in protestation, not in passive and emotional adoration or contemplation, but in definite constrained and precise performance. Thus the truest note of Christian love is not that of ecstasy, or rapture, or of a vague diffusive affection, but in purposeful acts of the will. If our feeling for Christ is real, it will impel us to do something real for Christ.

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[6] 2 Corinthians 5. 14.

That is what it meant for St. Paul. He had his raptures and his ecstasies and his visions. But these did not leave him up in the air: the love of Christ constrained him to definite and even painful tasks and duties, so that he could point to his body and say, "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."

What, we cannot help asking, has become of the vast wealth of Christian devotion? Has not much of it dispersed itself in atmospheric forms, instead of being condensed into strong and purposeful acts of service? One tries to compute what it would mean for the world's happiness if the language of devotion were matched by a life of concrete duty-doing. Does not too much of so-called Christian love begin—and end—in hymn-singing, in being fervent and fluent in prayer, in easy expressions of devotion, that never really get behind the will and constrain it to concrete and definite acts of service? It is this kind of Christian feeling which too often discredits Christianity and the churches. It makes one ask if too much time and effort are not expended in generating emotion which is not intended to be used. True love, it has been remarked, always costs something. The truer it is, the more it costs. But when one looks at Christian love one discovers all too often that the more it is said to be felt, the less it seems to cost. It is like a vapour that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away, whereas it ought to be like the expanding steam which gets behind the piston-rod and moves something; it is like a stream that aimlessly spreads itself out and gets nowhere, whereas it ought to be like the mill-stream that becomes the mill race and turns out something. So a great deal of Christian emotion goes up into the air when it ought to get under the will; it evaporates, when it ought to condense; it spreads when it ought to contract. The Real Love of Christ is always a constraining love. It finds its ultimate expression not in sentiments *about* Christ, and not in knowledge *concerning* Christ, not in feelings *for* Christ, but in specific and individualized service in the name of Christ, based on fundamental reverence and His teaching, His example, His Person. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." This is to love not in word, neither with the tongue, but in deed and truth. No emotion, it needs to be remembered, is safe that is an end in itself. It is never praiseworthy just to feel in a certain fashion. Feelings that are valued for the pleasurable sensations that they produce are corrupted feelings. Love that is unapplied is a baneful love. Christian sentiment which is not translated in expression of the will is a weakening and not an ennobling sentiment. "Love is righteousness applied to happiness; it is strength supplied to weakness; it is emotion constrained to service; it is sentiment turned to purpose." So Newman has written,

"Prune then thy words, the thoughts control
   That o'er thee swell and throng.
They will condense within thy soul
   And turn to purpose strong.

But he who lets his feelings run
In soft luxurious flow,
Faints when hard service must be done,
And shrinks at every blow."

Thus, it is not less feeling that we need in religion. If many people had less feeling than they have in religion, they would not have any. It is not less, but more, that we need. And not only more feeling, but more of the right kind of feeling: a feeling that comes, and comes only as the result of, as the reward of, a life that gives itself daily to God in an humble effort to know and to do His will, and to wait for, and so receive the gift of the Spirit; a feeling that issues in conduct as truly as the mill-stream turns the wheel and provides the food by which men live. For to be filled with the Spirit is to walk in the Spirit. And such is the living that not only exalts him who lives it, but recreates the life of the world in which he lives.

IX

THE COMFORT OF THE SPIRIT

"The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost."
—*St. John 14. 26.*

IX

THE COMFORT OF THE SPIRIT

THE word "Comforter" is used of the Holy Spirit frequently in the closing chapters of St. John's Gospel. "I will not leave you comfortless"; "When the Comforter is come, . . . he shall bear witness of me."[1] These and other verses where the word is used are familiar to us all. The question is, Why is the Holy Ghost called the "Comforter"? What is the real meaning of this designation, and why does Christ use it?

The word "Comforter," as it is used in the New Testament, as it is used here by Christ, means more than "Consoler." If Christ called the Holy Ghost the Comforter it was not primarily because He was to console the disciples after Christ had left them. The words "to comfort" mean more in our English speech than merely "to console." That is made plain by its derivation. Its root is the Latin *fortis,* which means "strong." And the Latin verb *confortare* means "to strengthen." In early English this use of the word was retained. Thus, Shakespeare says, "For my sake, be comfortable [i. e., "valiant"], and hold death awhile at arm's end." "Be comfortable to my mother and make much of her." "God comfort him in his necessity." And Bacon says, "Light excelleth in comforting [i. e., "strengthening"] the children of men." We still have this meaning of the word in at least one phrase in current use. In the language of the law it is an act of treason "to aid, to abet, or to comfort the enemy." To comfort is, then, in the original meaning of the word, to strengthen. A true comforter is one who strengthens. The Holy Ghost is called the Comforter because He was to inspire and to strengthen the disciples of Christ. He was to give them strength to bear their witness. He was to strengthen them to advance into the new Truth, which had not as yet been revealed to them.

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[1] St. John 14. 18; 15. 26 (R. V.).

That is the way the Spirit of God all through the Bible "comforted" the chosen children of God. From our poor, soft, human point of view it may look like "cold comfort" which the Spirit gave to those on whom it came. But when the Spirit descended upon Moses he was strengthened for his task. The still small voice which spoke to Elijah gave him renewed courage to stand before Ahab and to confound the prophets of Baal. When Jeremiah, in a weak moment, shrank from the task which God had laid on him, the Spirit put him on his feet again: "If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? And if in the land of peace, . . . they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?"[2]

Nowhere in the Old Testament do we find that the Spirit of God gives soft sympathy to those on whom it comes. Always it strengthened them for the performance of stern duty and the accomplishment of God-given tasks. The comfort of the Spirit lay in the fortitude, the powers of resistance, the extraordinary tenacity of purpose which it bequeathed. If by comfort is meant strength, there is no comfort comparable to that wherewith God comforted His workmen. It made them men of adamant.

Such was the comfort of Christ. The Gospels are crowded with stories of the way Christ comforted people. How did He do it? It was not mere pity. He did not sit down and weep with people in a kind of bathos of tenderness. When Christ had finished His comforting, someone was not weaker than he was before, but stronger. He was not less able to take care of himself, but more able. To the paralytic who had lain so long by the pool that the kind of passive helplessness which is the worst disease of all had fastened on him, Jesus said, "Take up thy bed, and walk." He was called upon to make his greatest exertion. The lepers, who wanted to be healed, were told to go show themselves to the priests, which was the last thing that they wanted to do. The comfort of Christ was the comfort that lifts. The appeal was made to the will.

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[2] Jeremiah 12. 5.

"Come unto me," said Christ, "and I will give you rest." But what kind of rest? Not the rest without a burden, but with it. "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; . . . For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."[3] The comfort of Christ, in a word, is not to remove a burden, but to apply it; and thus the burden-bearer is made strong. Here, for example, is a man whose father had died. He wanted to return home and indulge in the luxury of sorrow, but Jesus said: That is not the the way to get comforted; that kind of mourning will let you down, it will not lift you up; it will weaken you; it will not strengthen you; it will make you less able to face life without your father, not more able. But come, follow me; I will give you the right kind of comfort. I will give you the comfort that will strengthen you. Do what my disciples are doing. Preach the good tidings, release the captive, go about doing good, busy yourself in ministering in my name, and your grief will be healed. Such was the comfort of Christ. It was not the kind of pity and emotional sympathy that unnerves and weakens, but the appeal to the hidden reserves of strength and courage that build men up. It was real comfort because it made men strong.

Such also is the deepest meaning of the familiar Beatitude: "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." Blessed, that is, are the groaners, those who have heavy burdens to bear, hard tasks to perform, great responsibilities to meet, for it is thus that men are made strong. Real blessedness in life is not in having an easy time, but in having a hard time. It is by severe exercise that the body is made strong, that the mind is disciplined, and that the soul develops strength and fortitude.

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[3] St. Matthew 11. 28, 30.

This was the comfort of the Holy Ghost. Christ Himself was about to leave them. So long as He had been with them they had leaned on Him. He was a tower of strength to them. But now the strength which came from the physical presence of Christ was to be removed. It was not to be removed at once. During the time between the resurrection and ascension of Christ He had appeared to them intermittently, teaching them many things. But after Ascension Day these appearances ceased altogether. And instead of the strength which came from the presence of Christ among them before and after His death and resurrection, there was promised the strength of the Holy Ghost, who was to inspire them with new vigour and spiritual power. The Comforter, that is, the Strengthener, was to come, which is the Holy Ghost. And when He came how did the Holy Ghost comfort the apostles? We do not discover that it was passive consolation that they received. When they had had their comfort, they went out to preach Christ, and to be thrust in prison for Him, and some of them died for Him, beheaded by Herod, and the rest, we read, went everywhere, "walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost."[4] The comfort of the Holy Ghost was evidently of the kind that makes heroes.

We need a revival in the world of the comfort of the Holy Ghost. We need to revise our idea of what the word "comfort" really means. The word has been misused in our day. It has come to mean only negative compassion, a simple flow of tender feeling, an emotional sympathy which does not strengthen, but weakens. The only comfort which a great many people know how to give is a comfort which leaves people less prepared for struggle and resistance than they were. The whole idea of what real comfort is, and what it can do, is largely lost sight of in our day. A revolution would be caused in our relations with one another if we came, taught by the Holy Ghost, to know that the comfort that is of God is the comfort that strengthens.

Is the kind of comfort that we habitually receive—the kind of comfort that we are able to give—the comfort that strengthens? The kind of comfort that creates heroes? There is no absence of comfort in the world. Indeed, our age is marked with the sympathy with pain. There never was a time when the spirit of compassion was abroad in the world as it is to-day. It is not the quantity of comfort, but its quality which we question. For if we look at the kind of comfort which we find in the world to-day, we discover that too often the spirit of modern compassion gives birth to a kind of pseudo-sentimentalism which is, in fact, more cruel than strict justice. We discover mistaken forms of kindness that are worse than indifference. We find a kind of compassion which does not help, but hurts. Indeed, one of the things which the world most needs to-day is the kind of comfort that strengthens and does not debilitate—we need the Holy Ghost, the Comforter.

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[4] Acts 9. 31.

Illustrations abound. Consider, for example, the purely sympathetic way in which many children are brought up, encompassed from their very birth in an enervating atmosphere of parental solicitude and of emotional sympathy. In their babyhood they have been inoculated with disease because of the brooding anxiety of their mothers, whose dread of illness has actually produced it. In their childhood they have early discovered that the one thing they must never know the meaning of is inconvenience, discomfort, difficulty, exposure of any kind. They must be shielded from anything that is hard, or painful, or distasteful. They are comforted by their parents when stern teachers try to make them work, when stern nature gives them a needed lesson, or when rough experience tries to make them understand that this world is not, and was not made to be, a playground. As a result the child is morally incapable of endurance, becomes indolent, selfish, pleasure-loving. If he accomplishes anything in the world, it is in spite of the way he was brought up, and not because of it.

Or, again, people in trouble suffer terribly from the mistaken sympathy of well-meaning but uninspired people who do not know what real comfort is. The reason why people who are in bereavement shrink from going out among their friends is that they can so seldom count upon the kind of comfort that helps. Indeed, the majority of people to-day, unless they have been specially instructed of the Holy Ghost, give the kind of compassion that hurts rather than heals. How many times we have heard people complain of this well-meant but mistaken kind of sympathy which simply weakens their powers of resistance and accentuates their sufferings.

Contrast with this the remark of a teacher who heard of a sudden trouble that had befallen one of her pupils. Her only comment was, "She is equal to it." But there was enough in that sentence to have made the young woman bear a load ten times as great. How different that inspired comfort, "She is equal to it," from the conventional comfort which would have expressed itself in some such sentence as, "What a shame!" "How hard for you!" "You have my sympathy." Such is the difference between the Bible comfort and the world's comfort; between the comfort that helps and the comfort that hurts; between the comfort that lifts up and the comfort that lets down. "She is equal to it"—that is the comfort of the Holy Ghost.

"May the help that we give be for the strength and not for the weakness of others," is a good Whitsunday prayer for anyone to offer. Sympathy and compassion are divine qualities, and the world would be a sorrowful place without them. But if a struggle is to be carried on, or a sorrow to be faced—whether it be the grip of temptation, the ordeal of a surgical operation, loss of income, or bereavement by death—the sufferer needs bracing help rather than pity. Pity unnerves when there is most need of courage; or, worse than all, it engenders a self-pity which is the end of fortitude. In the sharpness of the trial one needs cheer and encouragement. After it, pity if you will, but always the love that maketh strong.

The author of the book of the Hebrews wrote to a people who were in great trouble. Doubtless some of them had suffered martyrdom. Doubtless there were many bereaved homes and empty hearts and discouraged souls among them. But how did he comfort them? By reading the roll-call of those who in days past through faith had subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, and had turned to flight the armies of the aliens. By holding up to them the form of Him who for the joy that was set before Him endured the Cross, despised the shame. Now "Ye," he wrote, "have not yet resisted unto blood."[5] And we can imagine that band of Christians to have been truly comforted at once. "Not yet unto blood"—that ringing phrase in itself was enough to have brought out every latent loyalty, every reserve of spiritual strength. It was the comfort of the Holy Ghost.

Or if we look at society at large, we find that it has the sum total of its unhappiness increased by the false sympathy of those who pride themselves on their sensitiveness to pain. "Who suffers when we are depressed by the misery of others?" Nietzsche once asked. And the answer was, "They do." This extreme apostle of individualism whose chiefest injunction to mankind was, "Be hard," thus put into words a truth worth a good deal more than much of the soft and pseudo-Christian sentimentalism which goes under the name of comfort. Tender-hearted people who "cannot bear" to consider the afflictions of the world are collectively more responsible for the spread of preventable human misery than are the selfish and the brutal. The reason why so many evils still exist in the world is that supersensitive spirits are made so sorry by them that they avoid having anything to do with them. The sensitive souls who hate to think of the dirt and squalor of the slums because they are disgusted by it are the very ones who perpetuate poverty and social disease and injustice. Thoughtless shrinking from evil has been the chief cause in creating or sustaining it. Consciously or unconsciously, the cruelest of all cruelties is the tenderness that swoons at the sight of suffering and that shields itself from the pain of beholding the misery of others.

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[5] Hebrews 12. 4.

The true comforter in the modern world is the one who represses the purely negative forms of compassion, and, facing the discouragements of environment, the depression of circumstances, the handicaps of every kind, walks, as Jesus walked, boldly into a sphere of living that drags down where it does not degrade, and speaks the word of hope and command. Radiating courage, appealing to a will which can overcome circumstance and conquer fate, such a comforter says in effect, "Other men and women have done harder things than this, have been in worse predicaments, and have come through, and so can you." The comfort of the Holy Ghost, in a word, is the comfort which always and under all circumstances appeals to the latent will which slumbers and sleeps at the bottom of every human soul. One of the most astonishing things in this world is the discovery of how much latent strength we have; of how much work we can do and how much suffering we can endure and still grow strong under it. The trouble with a good many people is that they have not had demands enough made upon them. But that is the way the Holy Ghost comforts—by giving men some task worthy of their powers, some burden that calls for the strength that has never yet been put forth. That is the way in which many people who may have felt that they are good for nothing are made to feel that they are good for anything. Modern therapeutics has taken this lesson straight from the teaching of the Bible. It has prescribed hard, unwelcome, and even distasteful tasks to people who are unnerved, without self-confidence, weak-willed through self-indulgence and despair of self, and thus made them strong. Life has been too easy for them. No summons has come to self-forgetting heroism, to the doing of rugged tasks and the bearing of heavy burdens. So it has come to pass that they have vainly sought to bear the heaviest of all burdens, the burden of themselves. The disease of self-pity fastens on them. They cherish the delusion that their fate in life is unique; that they have been marked out for trials such as never before were concentrated on a human being. They blame the world for their dismal failures and protest that, made as they are, nothing but wretchedness is in store for them. Here is a well-recognized form of malady that is more widely spread than we often care to admit. But it is a malady that is attendant upon an age of ease and luxury, of riches and so-called comfort.

When we turn back to the history of early New England, we do not find anywhere, in history or biography, the traces of such a social disease. The fact is that people had too much to do. This kind of unhappiness was not abroad in a land where people had to hew down forests and fight the Indians and to keep the wolf from the door. Those evils were in reality blessings; they were the kind of comfort that the Holy Ghost brings. And it is the kind of comfort, and the only kind of comfort, that thousands of self-regarding and unhappy men and women need to-day. They do not need to be condoled, or to be sympathized with in tender and emotional ways. They need a good moral earthquake that will rouse their manhood, appeal to their will, remind them that they live in a world where there is work to be done, tasks to be accomplished, burdens to be borne. The comfort they need is the offering to them of a foe that is worthy of their steel; of an objective that is a real challenge to their strength.

There is no rôle on earth to-day so great, so needed, as that of Comforter. Comfort is that mysterious influence of one personality upon another, whereby men are lifted up out of the slough of despond and the Pit of Hopelessness, their feet planted firmly upon the rock, their hearts filled with new force, new faith, new courage in the power of which they "march breast forward, never doubting clouds will break, never dreaming, though right be worsted, wrong will triumph." That is the true idea of comfort. Many a doctor is the comforter of his patients, not by reason of the bottles of medicines that he prescribes, but by the very spontaneous playing of his warm, genial, buoyant, optimistic spirit upon the soul of the patient. The teacher is the comforter of his dull, slow-witted pupil not by trying to transform him into one ignorantly read with lots of learned lumber in his head, but with sympathetic insight, seizing upon some one interest that is dear to him, doing all he can to foster it, aiding and abetting the student in the development of this interest right up to the top of his bent. What is the first step, according to General Booth, in saving the outcast? It is making the outcast feel that some decent human being cares enough for him to take an interest in the question of whether he is to rise or sink.

To be able to give real comfort is an index of the highest kind of personal life. No one can give what he does not possess. If true comfort is equivalent to real strength—and not mere consolation—then only one who is himself spiritually strong is able to comfort. The Holy Ghost is the supreme Comforter. And only one into whose life the Holy Spirit has come is capable of transmitting strength to another. One cannot sympathize without capacity for sympathy. The penalty of the selfish life is that it incapacitates itself for happiness for the reason that it has nothing to give. Happiness comes only through service, but one is equipped for service only by the comfort of the Holy Ghost.

In the autobiography of Mark Rutherford are to be found these words: "I told her that nothing I had ever attempted had succeeded; that I had never been able to attain to that degree of satisfaction with myself, with my conclusions, without which a man cannot live, and that I found I was useless even to the best friends I had ever known. She did not repel me. I should like to add one more Beatitude to those of the Gospels, and to say: 'Blessed are they who heal us of our self-despising.' Of all services which can be done to man, I know of none more precious." In his arresting volume called *Fear,* Dr. John Rathbone Oliver says (p. 242): "You want to be grateful for a man like that. . . . At the same time you should realize why. He comes to you with a wide sympathy, with a deep understanding: and because of this he is able to help you. . . . But don't forget what it has cost him to develop the understanding and to deepen the sympathy that helps you. He is like some powerful, efficient instrument that cuts clear because it has been tempered and sharpened. . . ."[6] If we are to be qualified and equipped to do work as precious as this, we need ourselves to be fortified by the Holy Ghost.

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[6] Used by permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

If comfort in this positive sense is the greatest need of the individual life, it is also the kind of compassion which our social order most lacks. Christian compassion in a certain sense has been lavished on a world filled with every imaginable injustice and want. But if this compassion be analyzed, if this pity be studied, its fundamental and glaring weakness is disclosed. Almost exclusively it has been directed toward the relief of suffering, and only a fraction of it toward its prevention. Society, in a word, waits until a man becomes poor, sick, and unfortunate, and then hastens to console him, whereas, had it given him in season the right kind of comfort, the strength of which he stood in need, he never would have become poor and unfortunate at all. And the question rises, How Christian, after all, is the charity, how noble is the comfort, which pays scant attention to the easily recognizable and steadily operating causes which produce poverty and destitution, and consists only in relieving it after it has come to exist? Here lies the most serious argument against Christian sympathy from the side of social science; that it encourages a sentimental and emotional humanitarianism which piously busies itself with the relief of suffering which its own moral blindness, ignorance, selfishness, and indifference have produced. Organized Christianity will not favour a policy of weak benevolence, or satisfy itself with prescribing gentle remedies, when once it has been baptized by the Holy Ghost. Yet, thus far, Christian charity contents itself chiefly with lavishing compassion on the victims of social injustice, and has not attacked the causes that make them so.

Doctor Crothers once used this illustration: Imagine a company of people standing on the shore and watching a ship break up with a great company of people exposed to death. Some might say, "Let us pray for them." Others might busy themselves with picking up the bodies as they were washed ashore, and seek to revive them and minister to them. But surely there would be some Greatheart present who would cry: "Let us put out a lifeboat and save them before they are cast helpless into the angry sea."

Such is the social comfort which Christianity needs to comprehend and exercise in our modern world. Solicitude for the unfortunate needs to be supplemented by that positive and constructive comfort which saves men by resolutely attacking the causes that produce their suffering. It is the comfort of the Holy Ghost.

St. Paul, who, as in every other aspect of the Christian experience, seems to have grasped the full significance of the meaning of the Holy Spirit, has compressed in a phrase the truth of the comfort of the Holy Ghost. . . . If we substitute the word "strength" for the word "comfort" in a well-known passage, we read: "Blessed be the God of all strength, who strengtheneth us in all our afflictions, that we may be able to strengthen them that are in any affliction through the strength wherewith we ourselves have been strengthened of God."[7]

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[7] 2 Corinthians 1. 3, 4.

X

THE FIRE OF THE SPIRIT

"Who maketh . . . his ministers a flame of fire."—*Psalm 104. 4; Hebrews 1. 7.*

X

THE FIRE OF THE SPIRIT

How is the gift of the Spirit to be received? Under what conditions shall this indispensable experience become ours? Is the baptism of the Spirit an experience different from that experience which comes to every soul which surrenders itself to God, and devotes itself to the love and service of Jesus Christ? Is it necessary, first, that one shall determine to follow Christ, and then beyond all that have a supplementary and distinct experience which comes from a baptism of the Spirit? Or, is the experience of the Spirit something that is implicit in the original divine experience by which one becomes a Christian?

Here is a question which cannot be answered dogmatically one way or the other. The effort to do so can only end in bewilderment and uncertainty. On the one hand, it must be admitted that, for some people, the baptism of the Spirit is a unique experience, distinct from that devotion to Christ which marked the beginning of the Christian life. So it was with the apostles. They were Christian from the day on which they had left their nets to follow Him. But it was not until the Day of Pentecost that they knew what it was to live and to labour with joy and enthusiasm, in the Spirit of their Master. So it has been with many ever since. In their earlier days they had given themselves to Christ. In a measure and to a degree they had endeavoured to follow in His steps, but then there had come a day, an hour, a moment when, for the first time, the richness and the fullness of this knowledge had been revealed to them. The Spirit of God, and of Christ, possessed them so utterly, and had flooded their being with such intensity, as to constitute a new and unique spiritual experience. They had their Day of Pentecost, their baptism of the Spirit.

Spiritual biography all through Christian history is full of authentic illustrations of this experience. Contemporary history furnishes its instances also, which cannot be doubted or denied. There are plenty of people to-day who can remember a day and hour, after years of patient, and, as it often seemed, fruitless effort to be Christian, when the Spirit descended upon them with power, swept away every obstacle to a full realization of the life of God, revealed every slumbering capacity of heart and mind, and liberated every motive of obedience and service. Then and there they entered into the joy of their Lord.

Some years ago, to give but a single illustration, one of the most eminent preachers in America described how he had known his Day of Pentecost. For years he had gone on working and preaching, and not without what is called success, not also without spiritual results. But there came a great sickness. He was smitten with rheumatic fever and lay bound on his bed with weights hanging on his feet. He suffered agonies for weeks and even months. And during that fiery trial he had had a spiritual experience transcending anything he had ever known. He called it, himself, a baptism of the Holy Ghost. He said that afterward he was a new and different man. He had been a Christian before—but he was a different Christian afterward. His preaching was different; his life was different; everything was different, after that the Holy Ghost had come upon him.

To argue, however, from all of this, that the baptism of the Spirit must be a special experience, supplementary to and distinct from that first devotion of the soul to God and to Christ, is to err in the opposite direction. Many years ago a company of college students attended a summer religious conference where the doctrine was preached that no one could in any real sense call himself a Christian who had not had a Day of Pentecost, a conscious baptism of the Spirit, distinct from that original act by which he had become a follower of Christ. Not comprehending this teaching, they invited the preacher to confer with them, and long into the night the conversation was continued. The preacher insisted that the baptism of the Spirit must be known and felt as a distinct and necessary experience. Every one of the college students felt that when any human soul had truly committed itself to Christ, there was a finality beyond which it was not necessary to look or to go. If the preacher had admitted that this might indeed be true, if the students had come to see that a sudden gift of the Spirit might be given, they would have ended their conference in agreement. As it was, they parted, neither understanding the other.

It ought to be enough to point to the fact that St. Paul himself never knew any other day in his Christian experience than the Damascan Day, to prove that the Spirit may come in fullness and power with the original dedication of the will to Christ. This, indeed, is probably the normal method. One cannot point to any day or hour and say, "Then I had my baptism of the Holy Spirit."

It is not discernible that the teaching of the apostles was that their converts must have a Day of Pentecost. All that was necessary was that they should have received the Holy Spirit. And while that Spirit may come with a rush of suddenly revealed power, the same Spirit may come like a Dove.

"He comes sweet influence to impart,
  A gracious, willing Guest,
While He can find one humble heart
  Wherein to rest."

A striking feature of the story of the Day of Pentecost as recorded in the Acts is that "tongues like as of fire, . . . sat upon each of them."[1] If, now, one wants to know whether or not he has had an experience of the Holy Spirit, a sure and final test is to introduce the notion of fire. If there is something corresponding to fire in one's Christian experience, whether or not one can point to a Day of Pentecost, one may be sure that he has, indeed, received the Holy Spirit. Evidently, it is possible to have a Christian experience without fire. Yet, that experience never is all that it ought to be, or all that it may be, unless there is within it that spiritual Fact of which "Fire" is the symbol.

Now we may all have an experience of God, for example, that lacks the element of Fire. We may believe in a general way that God made the world; that He rules it and governs it; that the sun, moon, and stars are all obedient to His will; we may believe that He directs and orders events; is shaping all the affairs of this world to His own predestined ends; we may believe, further, that He cares for each one of us; that our lives are safe in His keeping; that all things work together for good to them who love Him; we may draw much consolation and comfort from this belief; we may bear ourselves serenely and with courage in the face of danger and vicissitudes upheld by this belief. And yet there may be wholly lacking in our experience anything that tallies at all with the word "fire." In no real sense can we be said to be on fire for God; by no figure of speech, by no effort of our imagination would anyone say of us that we were burning with any passion of righteousness. We are not kindled or kindling personalities.

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[1] Acts 2. 3.

Similarly with our experience of Jesus Christ. With this new and additional faith comes a surprising truth into the soul. The love of Jesus seems so simple, so real, so beautiful. To know Him as a Friend, to follow Him as a Leader, to trust Him as a Brother, to depend on Him as a Saviour, to obey His commands, to imitate His example, to rely on His power, to cling to His cross—all of this means joy and simplicity and faith and daily hope and love. And yet, what is truer than that we all may have this—that we may have all of this—and yet not have that intangible, yet vivid element of spiritual experience which is akin to fire. No one would ever think of fire when they thought of us. They might call us placid, faithful, useful, even earnest, but if anyone should say "fire," suggest passion—no, certainly we are not exactly that. One might have an experience of Christianity and yet not have an experience of the Holy Ghost —not have a baptism of fire.

Yet, all of us without exception would admit that any character that lacks this element for which the word "fire" stands lacks an essential element of what we all recognize as a complete human character—certainly a complete Christian character. If we hold up before us any man or woman whom we unaffectedly admire, to whom the full loyalty of our nature goes out, there is in that person something which we can denominate only as Divine Fire. A person may possess sweetness, culture, poise, control, judgment—all of the elements of a well-rounded nature—but if he lacks fire, he lacks something that makes one withhold from him one's full admiration and confidence. Within the gentlest soul must be the lambent flame.

In her poem entitled "Rouge Gagne," Julia Ward Howe has put into words what we all feel:

"And men who conquer deadly odds
By fields of ice and raging floods
Take the red passion from the gods.

"I see the chasm yawning dread,
I see the flaming arch o'erhead,
I stake my life upon the red."[2]

Every one of us would do the same. If we had to stake our all on a life, we would stake it on a life that is red, and not on one which was only white.

Florence Ripley Masten, in her little poem called "To the Dreamer" (not mentioning any names), has put the same sentiment in other words:

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[2] *Later Lyrics, Poems of Study and Experience*, Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Company, Boston, 1887. Reprinted by permission.

"I cannot help but love the knight who goes
Unchampioned, derided by his foes
And friends, to seek the white star of his dreams
In the black night. He only sees the gleam;
And heeding neither laughter nor the sneers
Of sane complacency, his course he steers
Into the starless skies. Perchance for him
The dream will never out of darkness swim.
Yet better, dream-possessed, to falter down
In failure than to snicker, like a clown
Over the dream. God give us grace to see
The grandeur in the soul of errantry."[3]

Touched with fire! It is what makes a sacrifice that may be prepared and laid, leap up a flame upon the altar, acceptable to God.

Everywhere in the Bible character becomes important only when it has been touched with fire. Isaiah, in a significant phrase, speaks of "the spirit of burning."[4] "The spirit of burning denotes the ardour, the zeal, the spiritual energy, the holy enthusiasm created in the human soul by virtue of its intimate fellowship with the Spirit of God."

The favourite Old Testament symbol for God is fire. It was in a flaming bush that Moses first knew God as a power in his life. The pillar of fire in the wilderness led His people on. The fire which fell on the sacrifice at Carmel was a symbol of the terrible reality of God. Not until the Spirit of burning had entered into the heart of God's prophets did they know, were they able to proclaim His will. "His word," said Jeremiah, "was . . . as a burning fire shut up in my bones."[5]

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[3] Printed in the New York Times, December 4, 1915. Used by permission.

[4] Isaiah 4. 4.

In the New Testament John the Baptist distinguished between his ministry, which was negative and consisted in the putting away of evil, and that of Jesus, which was positive and convincing, by declaring, "I indeed baptize you with water . . . but . . . he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire."[6] Christ Himself took up the symbol and immortalized it when He cried, "I am come to send fire on the earth."[7] When the apostles had their Day of Pentecost, tongues like as of fire sat upon them. And the author of the Hebrews put it in a word when, quoting the psalmist, he said, "He maketh . . . his ministers a flame of fire."

No character, therefore, can be formed on Bible pattern, no character can in the deepest sense be called Christian, which lacks the quality of fire. Let a soul have all the other fruits of the Spirit—joy, peace, gentleness, temperance—but fail to have the passion flower, the flaming blossom of deepest red, and it lacks the characteristically Christian quality of the soul.

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[5] Jeremiah 20. 9.
[6] St. Matthew 3. 11.
[7] St. Luke 12. 49.

When Jesus said to the rich young man, "One thing thou lackest," it was surely the fire of a consuming devotion that would make him take all that he had and throw it with joy upon the altar of his otherwise perfect service. When St. Paul said that all other virtues profit us nothing without love—it was a love of which the fire of passion was an inseparable ingredient.

The more distinctively Christian any soul is to-day, the more fire that soul has within it, the more you can see and feel the Spirit of burning. Whatever else that soul is, whatever else he lacks, passion he has in abundance.

There is the Anabaptist Belthasar, who stands in the midst of apparent failure, and says, "Truth is immortal and though for a long time she be imprisoned, scourged, crowned with thorns, crucified and buried—on the third day she will rise victorious, and will reign in triumph." There is Joseph Hardy Neesima, saying, "Let us advance upon our knees." Or Melinda Rankin, saying, "The word discouragement is not to be found in the dictionary of the kingdom of heaven."

Henry Martyn burned himself out for God at the age of thirty-four, of whom it was said that he was without a torpid nerve in him. His motto was, "I see no business in life but the work of Christ." Livingstone, a living flame, said as a young man, "I will place no value on anything I have or may possess, except in relation to the kingdom of Christ," and as an old man wandering in the midst of discouragement and deprivation, such as few human souls have ever been called upon to endure, said, "Nothing earthly will make me give up my work in despair."

There is Samuel Armstrong, saying, "The glory of life lies in doing the thing that can't be done."

Or Doctor Howe, saying, "Obstacles are things to be overcome"; or Hiram Bingham, "I am not here for a furlough, I am here for orders"; or George Owen, "The world has many religions, but one gospel."

It is all the same story—there was the red flame. They all had their baptism of the Holy Ghost. They were His ministers, a flame of fire. All down the quivering red line of the saints in every generation, we see the tongues of fire, the dance of flames, the soul catching the spark from the altar and showing the touch of the Divine Fire. It is all, in a word, a repetition of the experience of the apostles in the upper room on the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Ghost came like fire.

"In the fifth century Patrick goes to Ireland and labours until it becomes known as 'the island of saints.' In the ninth century Anskar goes to evangelize Norway and Sweden. Cyril and Methodius go out to win the savage slaves of Russia and the Balkans, until the Greek Church to-day numbers more than a hundred millions. In the thirteenth century Francis of Assisi gathers about him twelve young men, and they go out in poverty, in joy, in song, winning men, until all Italy turns to them. In the sixteenth century Ignatius Loyola and Xavier, with a group of eight students, kneel in the little chapel in Paris to dedicate their lives to the service of Christ. They aim at winning the world for Him. Xavier goes like a flame of fire along the coasts of India and Southern Asia, scarcely knowing the language, yet living with the poor fishermen, sharing their food and their life, so pouring out his heart in prayer and work that thousands turn to God. He won converts all the way from India to Japan, where multitudes were later martyred for their faith. We often cannot agree with his doctrines or his methods, but by his burning zeal he puts us to shame.

"In the eighteenth century Zinzendorf, with the Moravians, is burning out for God, saying, 'I have one passion, it is Christ and Him only.' John Wesley was won by the personal work of the Moravian, Peter Bohler. Wesley goes through England, dealing with men one by one, organizing them into little groups and bands for vital life and service, until, as the historian Green tells us, the very tone of English society was changed."

Is not this the type of character for which we wait to-day? We have so many respectable people, useful people, earnest people; we have so many people of the type of Mabel in Hutchinson's *If Winter Comes,* so immaculate, so fastidious, and so irreproachable. What we need is souls on fire, what Ernest Bourner Allen has called Men of the Burning Heart. "Could but fire baptize them—the flaming force of the Holy Spirit flow through their hearts—the hot zeal of God Himself for right and duty! The passionate love of God for those gone wrong or going wrong—what a change it would make from smug self-appreciation, from a small content with being reasonably good, into fervent energy enlisted without reserve for a nobler world."

No man counts much for the Kingdom who does not have passion. When a famous United States senator died a few years ago, an able New York editor said of him that he was clear-headed, patient and strong, but yet "he never had a genuine enthusiasm for a principle vitally believed." Therein is the epitaph of many a fruitless Christian. We lack that which St. Paul saw in the man who was "fervent in spirit"; and "fervent" here means "boiling." It pictures the man with the hot and burning heart!

The world to-day needs desperately a type of character whose ruling passion is expressed in the Panama Canal Digger's song:

"Got any rivers that are uncrossable?
 Got any mountains you can't tunnel through?
We specialize in the wholly impossible,
 Doing the thing that no man can do."

The pioneer railway builders of the West had for their proud motto, *"Viam aut inveniam aut faciam"*[7] (I will find a way or I will make a way). And such is the motto of all who have been touched by the fire of the Spirit.

"There is a current philosophy with which we are all familiar which, under the guise of prudence, or, as it likes to be known and spoken of, common sense, tends to discredit idealism of any kind and to look down in serene contempt upon the less cultured enthusiasms of well-meaning but misguided souls. Such is the wisdom of prudence, which hugs the shore of comfort and safety, and holds back from the great adventures of the Spirit; which doubts the realities of the higher life because no longer in touch with them; which challenges every generous impulse and chivalrous experiment; which sometimes recognizes the beauty of high aims, but always questions the possibility of realizing them; which sees the long list of apparent failures, infelicities, disappointments, and says, 'Let us be prudent, let us sail close to the shore and not waste our time and energy upon the unrealizable ideals of life.'

"Such is the philosophy of those who have exchanged their ideals for their comfort, and because their ideals no longer live with them, believe that they have ceased to exist for everybody else; who look out of the windows of their comfortable homes and shrug their shoulders as they see men and women storm past—ardent, impetuous, filled with great hopes—and then go back to their firesides and thank God that they at least are not seeking to accomplish the impossible."

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[7] Found on the cover design of *The Economic Theory of the Development of Railways*, by A. M. Wellington, 1887.

But when one has been touched with the Spirit of God, then one becomes a Spiritual Adventurer, a flame of fire:

"Be not like them
Who sit at home and there dream and dally,
Raking the embers of the long-dead years,
But ye go down to the haunted valley
Light-hearted pioneers.
They have forgotten they were ever young;
They hear your songs in an unknown tongue,
But the gleam of God through your Spirit shines,
Adventurers, O adventurers."

Ministers need their Day of Pentecost, need it desperately. Ask yourself what is the matter with the ministry, if anything is, and you cannot come closer to it than to say—it lacks fire. And nothing compensates for that. A minister may be careful, cultured, patient, earnest, and have all other virtues in the ministerial catalogue of virtues, but if he lacks the fire of the Holy Ghost, he lacks the one thing needful. If a minister of God is good for anything his must be the power to make other people catch fire. And only fire can do that. It is only life that can kindle life; only a spirit that burns that can make other hearts and spirits burn also. Of a certain minister it was lately said, "He had everything—culture, intellect, discipline—but nothing approaching a touch of fire." The one supreme qualification for the ministry is a heart aflame. The power to kindle the spirit of our fellow men is the endowment for which the world prays and pleads. No classroom can give it. The intellectual interests of university life may stifle it. But the man who has it carries with him everywhere the argument from which there is no appeal. It is an old argument, this, but we cannot get away from it—that the world bows before a soul.

What we want to know about religion is not so much that it is reasonable, but that it is real—and blessed the man who has been so baptized by the Spirit that he can make other men feel it and know it.

And we all need it—this blessed baptism of fire, having our hearts kindled by the Holy Ghost. We are in danger of becoming unheroic and commonplace. We are on the way to being what was recently described as "monotonous personalities." We want for our own sakes something which shall fire the imagination, something great enough to put a tax on all our faculties and powers and strain them almost to the breaking point. We want something which shall inspire and demand heroism; something which the unspiritualized mind cannot understand; something at which every safe and prudent man will laugh. We need the fire of the Holy Ghost.

How will it show itself? For one thing, in the effect of our lives on the lives of other men. If we are on fire, the one nearest us will catch the flame from us. Men are wonderfully eager for this. Their lives are all ready for the spark that our lives can bring to them. The present religious situation calls for nothing so much as for this transmission of spirit by a universal contact which can come only as each separate Christian is himself a bit of flame. And no Christian will ever know what his faith means to him until he sees what it may mean to someone else through him. It not only deepens our happiness, it deepens our character also.

Again, a Christian who has had his baptism of fire never acquiesces in the social shames and wrongs of the world in which he lives. He may walk about seemingly serene and happy, but always underneath there burn the fires of moral indignation which are ready to leap forth and consume in their wrath some bit of social injustice, some piece of shame, some remnant of indecency which they find in their path. This unquenchable fire for righteousness constitutes the social hope, and the only social hope, of our time, and is the guarantee of better days to come. And in the personal life it means a positive transformation, the transformation of passive resignation into glad acceptance; of patient endurance into spiritual joy; of mere surrender into a lyric kind of happiness and peace which is not of this world.

All this may seem very mystical, but it is really simple and natural. It may tempt to an unwise pietism, yet it really points to the higher and truer levels of a spiritual experience possible for all. No man knows what it is to be fully and supremely himself until he has attained it; until his whole life lies open before God; until in word and thought and deed he is an echo of the Divine Being; until he can say,

> "I know not what it is to doubt,
> My heart is ever gay;
> I run no risk, for, come what will,
> God always has His way."

The fire of the Holy Ghost! It may come in one way or it may come in another. Yet, except we have been touched by fire until we become ourselves a flame of fire, we have not had our needed baptism of the Holy Spirit.

> "Spirit of God, descend upon my heart;
> Wean it from earth; through all its pulses move;
> Stoop to my weakness, mighty as Thou art,
> And make me love Thee as I ought to love.
> "Teach me to love Thee as Thine angels love,
> One holy passion filling all my frame,
> The baptism of the heaven-descended Dove,
> My heart an altar, and Thy love the flame."

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